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# THIRTEEN SERMONS

ON

I. HYPOCRISY AND CRUELTY—II. DRUNKENNESS—III. BRIBERY—  
IV. THE RIGHTS OF THE POOR—V. UNJUST JUDGES—VI. THE  
SLUGGARD—VII. MURDER—VIII. GAMING—IX. PUBLIC ROB-  
BERY—X. THE UNNATURAL MOTHER—XI. FORBIDDING MARRI-  
AGE—XII. PARSONS AND TITHES—XIII. GOOD FRIDAY.

To which is added,

AN ADDRESS TO THE WORKING PEOPLE,

ON THE

NEW DEAD BODY BILL

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BY WILLIAM COBBETT, M. P.

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# NABOTH'S VINEYARD,

OR,

## GOD'S VENGEANCE

AGAINST

### HYPOCRISY AND CRUELTY.

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"And she wrote in the letters, saying, *Proclaim a fast*, and set NABOTH on high among the people: and set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst *blaspheme* God and the King. And then carry him out, and stone him, that he may die."—1 KINGS, chap. xxi. ver. 9, 10.

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**HYPOCRISY**, in the general acceptation of the word, is dissimulation, or deceit, with regard to virtuous thoughts and conduct, and especially with regard to *religious* matters. It is a pretending to feel what we do not feel, to believe what we do not believe, to practise what we do not practise. It is an odious vice: it is greatly mischievous, because, by assuming the garb of, it reflects, in the hour of detection, disgrace, upon virtue itself: it must be founded in evil design, because it proceeds from cool deliberation and calculation: it includes lying and fraud: its natural tendency is to produce injury to our neighbour and to dishonour real religion: accordingly, numerous are God's denunciations against it, and numerous are the instances, in which Holy Writ holds it up as visited with signal vengeance.

In this vice, as in most others, there are, however, *degrees*. Sometimes it is practised for the purpose of avoiding the suspicions, or merited ill-will, of other men; sometimes for the purpose of obtaining the confidence of others, without any settled design to make it the means of committing any positive and particular injury; on other, and much more frequent, occasions, it is employed to lull suspicion asleep, to inspire unbounded confidence, and this for the purpose of securely committing, in the end, some act of *gainful fraud*.

Hypocrisy, being a false pretending, may exist without any pretence to piety; but, it is always prone to assume a *religious* garb; that being the best calculated to deceive good, and therefore unsuspecting, persons. When once the hypocrite has assumed this garb, there are few things that he will stick at; the necessary preliminary being, a setting of the admonitions of conscience at defiance. Thus hardened, the hypocrite will proceed to almost any lengths. First, he endeavours to obtain his object by exciting in others a high opinion of his own purity; but, should this fail him, should he be thwarted in his career, he will fall to comparisons between himself and those by whom he is thwarted. He next proceeds to slanders, calumnies, and even to false swearings against them; and, rather than finally fail in attaining the fruit of his long premeditated schemes, he will, without the least remorse, dip his hands in the blood of the innocent.

The Bible, in numerous cases, condemns the principles and practices of the hypocrite. It in almost every instance associates *malice* with hypocrisy. It almost every where assumes that the hypocrite is both cruel and perfidious; and, it every

where pronounces upon the hypocrite the severest of sentences. In the Book of Job, Chap. viii. v. 13. it is declared, that "the hypocrite's hope shall perish." In Chap. xx. v. 5. we are told, "the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment." The whole of this chapter goes on to enumerate vengeance upon his head. It is declared that he shall be rendered miserable; that he shall become old even in his youth; that the meat in his bowels shall be turned into gall; that he shall suck down the poison of asps; that in the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits; that, in short, the heritage appointed to him by God shall be an endless curse upon himself and his posterity.

But, we have, in this same chapter of the Book of Job, a description of the objects which the hypocrite generally has in view. We are told in ver. 15, that, "he hath *swallowed down riches*, and he shall vomit them up again." We are further told where he has got the riches; thus: "he hath oppressed, and hath forsaken *the poor*: he hath violently taken away an house which he builded not."

Thus, as was before observed, hypocrisy has generally *gainful fraud for its object*. Hypocrisy is by no means a theoretical vice. It is practical; and its object is always self-interest. It sometimes proceeds by round about means. Its object is not always manifest to lookers on; there are steps, and sometimes steps hardly discernible; but it always is its ultimate object, to get, or to preserve, possession of, something or other, which, in right and justice, the hypocrite ought not to possess. If this possession can be obtained, or preserved, without violence; if, to use the words just quoted, of good

Job, the hypocrite can take away a "house which he builded not;" if he can do this without violence, he will be content; but if he cannot, he will resort to the violence. If he can carry his point with a smaller degree of oppression, he will abstain from the larger degree; but if he cannot, he will exercise oppression, even to the shedding of the blood of his unoffending neighbour.

These truths might be illustrated by thousands of examples; and I may, hereafter, show the desolation which hypocrisy has occasioned in the latter ages of the world. I may, hereafter, show how this detestable vice has spread the rack, and furnished the stake, with not only innocent, but most virtuous human beings. At present, however, let me beseech the reader's best attention to that remarkable instance of hypocrisy and cruelty, recorded in the ~~xxist~~ chap. of the first Book of Kings, in the history of the tragical death of NABOTH the Jezreelite. For, in this history, we have a true and complete picture of the character of hypocrisy; of its great and almost invariable object; and of the horrible means which it employs, when driven to its last resort.

AHAB, the king of Samaria, had taken a fancy to the vineyard of Naboth, which lay hard by his palace. He made a proposition to NABOTH for the purchase of the vineyard. NABOTH, not out of any wilfulness or obstinacy; but out of a natural and laudable desire to preserve in his family that which had descended to him from his ancestors, refused, saying, "The Lord forbid it me, that I should give unto thee the inheritance of my fathers."

What could be more reasonable; what more praiseworthy than the ground of this refusal? Here was disinterestedness; for there can be no

doubt that NABOTH might have received double the real worth of his vineyard. But gain had no weight with him when put in the scale against reverence for the memory of his forefathers. A refusal, proceeding from such a sentiment, ought not only to have been sufficient to obviate the giving of offence to Ahab; but it ought to have given great pleasure to the king, who ought to have felt proud to think that he was the sovereign of subjects of the high sentiments of whom he here had so striking a specimen.

Very different, however, were the consequences with regard to poor NABOTH. The king, who was a weak and childish sort of being, became miserable on account of this refusal; appeared greatly dejected; was plunged into melancholy, and would neither eat nor drink. The queen, JEZEBEL, however, was of a different character. She, who seems to have carried hypocrisy to its state of deadly perfection, was not long in falling upon the means of gratifying the wishes of her husband, without consulting NABOTH, and without giving any thing for the vineyard, either in money or in kind. "Let thine heart be merry," said she, "for I will give thee the vineyard of NABOTH the Jezreelite."

And now, we are going to see how hypocrisy goes to work, in order to effect its object; which object, be it never forgotten, always is to preserve, or to obtain possession of, that which of right and justice does not belong to the hypocrite. JEZEBEL saw clearly that it was useless to endeavour to prevail upon NABOTH by temptations of lucre; because his refusal was founded upon principle. She, therefore, conceived the truly diabolical project of bringing against him a false accusation; and

that the accusation might be such as to insure his destruction, and at the same time deprive him of the compassion of his fellow subjects, she caused him to be accused of blasphemy; a very horrid crime in the eyes of all good men; and, therefore, the best calculated for the effecting of her nefarious purpose. But, now, mark well the dreadful means that she resorted to. She wrote letters in her husband's name to the Nobles and to the Elders; that is to say, to the nobles and the magistrates, which magistrates were also the *Judges*. In these letters she desired the persons to whom they were written, to proclaim *a fast, or religious festival*; for we always find that when injustice and cruelty of the most atrocious and horrible description are about to be committed, the pretence of extreme piety, and the most glaring outward show of religion, are put in the fore-ground. "*Proclaim a fast*;" said this wicked woman, "and set NABOTH on high, amongst the people; then set two men, sons of Belial, (that is to say, men of desperate wickedness) before him, to bear witness against him, saying, thou didst *blaspheme* God and the king; and then carry him out and *stone him, that he may die.*"

Horrible as was the import of this message, the base nobles, and the baser Judges, did as JEZEBEL had sent unto them. They proclaimed the solemn fast; they hoisted the religious banners; they invoked the assistance of the Almighty; they set NABOTH on high among the people; they brought the two false witnesses to swear against him; and then, followed by the deluded crowd, they carried him forth out of the city, and he was "stoned with stones that he died!"

Were it not for the information which history has afforded us, we should be led to believe, that

this was an imaginary case, or parable, intended to illustrate the workings of the most deadly hypocrisy, and to show, in the sequel, the consequences to the principal actors in the cruel and bloody scene. For, what do we behold here? We behold Nobles and Judges engaged coolly and deliberately in the work of finding out and hiring false witnesses to take away the life of an innocent man. We behold them resorting to the shameless act of employing the most infamous of mankind for this purpose. We behold them sitting in a mockery of judgment on this innocent man; and we behold them, with unmoved countenances, seeing him stoned to death, in execution of their judgment, founded upon the evidence of wretches whom they had themselves hired to swear falsely against him. And, which is the finishing stroke to the picture, we behold them doing these things under the mask of religion; on the day of a solemn festival; and for the pretended purpose of punishing blasphemy!

The Bible does not tell us what were the feelings with which these base nobles, and these unjust judges, retired to their homes, and laid their heads upon their pillows. They had succeeded in accomplishing their bloody work; and we are left to suppose that they finally received their reward in the chastisement which God has reserved for the unjust and bloody-minded.

But with regard to the *instigators* to this crying sin, the Bible has taken care not to leave us to conjecture or inference. It has given us a full account of the *consequences*, to *them*, of this work of hypocrisy and cruelty. The king, who had not, indeed, been an actor in the matter, but who had sanctioned the proceedings of his wife, by making no remonstrance against her conduct, and, still more

explicitly, by going in person and taking possession of the vineyard of the murdered NABOTH; the king, warned by the prophet, began to humble himself; he tasted of evil all his days; he was killed by his enemies in battle; and according to the sentence passed upon him, the dogs licked up his blood, as they had licked up the blood of NABOTH. The forefathers of NABOTH were not allowed to have weight with him. His truly pious sentiments with respect to ancestry and posterity were not listened to. The Lord, therefore cut off the posterity of AHAB. JEHU slew his son in the very vineyard which had belonged to NABOTH. "Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of NABOTH, and the blood of his sons," saith the Lord; "and I will requite thee in this plat of ground."

Having slain the son and successor of AHAB, JEHU proceeded to the rest of his work, and slew all the children of the destroyer of NABOTH and his children. JEZEBEL was punished in a most singular manner. She was looking out of a window, and JEHU said, "Throw her down. So they threw her down: and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses; and he trod her under foot. And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her: for she is a king's daughter: and they went to bury her: but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands. Therefore they came again, and told him. And he said, This is the word of the Lord, which he spake by his servant ELIJAH, the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of JEZREEL shall dogs eat the flesh of JEZEBEL. And the carcase of JEZEBEL shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the portion of JEZREEL; so

that they shall not say, This is JEZEBEL." 2 Kings, chap. ix.

Thus we have the whole history : the object ; the means of accomplishment ; the manner of the accomplishment ; the success of the contemplated crime ; and finally, the signal and awful punishment of the criminals. At first sight we are stricken with horror at the punishment inflicted upon JEZEBEL. But, looking back at her offence ; viewing the coolness of her cruelty towards NABOTH ; seeing her instigating magistrates, and judges themselves, to suborn wretches to swear away the life of an innocent man ; and, above all things, seeing her effect this bloody purpose with all the insignia of religious ceremony drawn forth, and under a pretence of uncommon reverence for God, and an uncommonly anxious desire to prevent his name from being blasphemed ; when we consider these things, can we say that her punishment was too severe ? can we say that her carcase ought not to have been " as dung upon the face of the field ?"

Let us now look back : let us re-consider the whole of this history. Here we see that to get at the property of others is the object of hypocrisy. JEZEBEL would not have brought the charge of *blasphemy* against NABOTH, if NABOTH had had nothing of which she wished to obtain possession. This was the grand object. This it was that excited her pretended zeal in the cause of religion. The unfortunate JEZREELITE was in possession of a thing which she wanted to possess. He, very naturally, desired to keep his own. She had no means of taking it from him by *law*, or under any colour of law ; and, therefore, she resorted to the false accusation of *blasphemy*.

It is material to observe, that the crime of blas-

phemy was selected, in preference to any other crime, for reasons which are obvious enough. In the first place, this crime consists in the utterance of *word* merely. If the crime, falsely imputed, had been that of robbery, or murder, it would have been more difficult to satisfy the minds of the people on the score of proof. The positive evidence must have been corroborated by facts and circumstances. There must have been some one robbed; there must have been some one killed. The bare words, or bare oaths, of two witnesses, would not have been sufficient to justify in the minds of the people the horrible act of stoning a man to death. Besides it was necessary to select a crime, with regard to which *reason* has much less to do with the populace than *passion*. Men do not reason upon subjects where their hopes and fears are deeply engaged. The mass of mankind, having adopted certain opinions with regard to their eternal happiness or misery, are not only shocked at, but are filled with anger against, any one who does or says any thing which tends to shake those opinions. Besides this, self-love rises up, human pride pushes forward, with volumes of resentment on their tongues, against him who ventures to treat with levity, and especially to hold up as fabulous, a thing which the mass of mankind have regarded, not only in the most serious light, but as an object worthy of their constant attention all their life through. To this may be added, that no small portion of every people will always think that they have a certain degree of merit with God, if they discover particular zeal in the cause of religion; and it is by no means strange, if they find it much easier to give proof of this zeal by showing their decided and inveterate hostility to men accused of a want of religion, than by carefully, constant-

ly, and quietly practising the christian virtues of gentleness, forbearance, and charity.

For all these reasons, and many others that might be mentioned, *blasphemy* is always the crime which hypocrisy will select to be falsely imputed, as the means of accomplishing its plundering purposes. Accuse men of robbery, of murder, of incest, or of any other crime, and the people wait patiently for the trial and the *proof*. These are crimes which their brother christians frequently commit. But accuse men of *blasphemy*; take that word for your means; mark the victim with *blasphemy* on his forehead; you thereby mark him out as an object for general abhorrence. No reasoning comes to bespeak the patience of your hearers, or to guide them to a just and merciful decision; guilt is taken for granted; the victim falls; and the hypocrite is glutted with the plunder. Of all the crimes imputed to mortal man, blasphemy is that of which people in general require the slightest proof, and to which they are always ready to award the most cruel of punishments.

JEZEBEL, together with the nobles and magistrates of Samaria, seem to have been fully aware of this. They took special care to disguise the *real object* of the persecution of NABOTH. They said not a word about the vineyard. They did not complain to the people that NABOTH was an obstinate man; that he had been rude to the king; that he had refused to let him have the inheritance of his fathers, whether for money, or in the way of barter; they did not let it transpire, that his life was sought because he would not part with his property; they took extremely good care to invent something that should enlist the passions of the people on their side; and that should make even good men

approve of a deed, which, if those good men had known the real truth, could, in all probability, not have been perpetrated. The real motive would not bear the light. The false motive was absolutely necessary; and we ought, therefore, always to be upon our guard as to matters of this kind. When we hear our neighbour railed against as a *blasphemer*, and especially when we see him seriously arraigned upon such an imputation, we ought not to decide hastily against him: common justice demands that we coolly and impartially enquire into the grounds of the accusation; that we become acquainted, if possible, with the life and conversation of our accused neighbour, or fellow-subject; for if, without these precautions, we condemn our neighbour; and especially if we contribute, in the smallest degree, to his death or ruin, we justly incur liability to all the penalties which God has, over and over again, awarded to those which shall be guilty of unjust judgment; there being, in the clear eye of reason and of conscience, but very little difference indeed between the crime of the unjust Judge and that of the persons who wink at, or approve of his conduct, such persons being, in fact, his aiders and abettors.

It is necessary for us to keep constantly in view, that the object of hypocrisy is *plunder*. Hypocrisy works in various ways; it discovers itself in various forms; it has halting places in its career; but its ultimate object is *plunder*. Its means is persecution of some sort or other; cruelty, if cruelty be necessary. Murder in this or that form; if nothing short of murder will do. But to get at the property of others, and to secure that property, are the objects.

There is another circumstance suggested by the history of the murder of NABOTH, proceeding, as

it did, from a charge of *blasphemy*; and that is, that this charge has, for the most part, been preferred, not only from motives of plunder, but by persons of the most profligate characters and lives; and, for the far greater part, by those who were themselves most impious. We find this same JEZEBEL, this accuser of NABOTH, an idolatress, and a bitter enemy of the prophet ELIJAH. We find her plotting the destruction of the prophet, and only missing her aim by the flight of the prophet. We find her the most profligate person in all the walks of life; setting at defiance every rule of decorum, and even of decency. We shall too, if we look into history of more modern date, find that, in general, the first to prefer accusations of *blasphemy* are persons who themselves have not the smallest sense of religion.

The hypocrite has only to persuade the people that he is actuated by pious motives, and that the punishment he is inflicting is for the *support of religion*; he has only to take care of these two things, and he may almost skin his victim alive in the presence of the populace. Good, gentle, kind, most benevolent, and most humane persons; persons who shudder at the thought of cruelty under all other circumstances, are, in cases like this; in cases where religion is concerned; in cases where *blasphemy* is the charge preferred; in such cases, they are furious as beasts of prey; or, at best, unfeeling as stocks and stones.

But, is such the conduct to be expected of good men? Is such the conduct to be expected of men who found their hope of salvation in being followers of Him who taught the sacred duties of forbearance and benevolence? Such persons may endeavour to reconcile their conduct to their con-

sciences by affecting to believe, that their cruelty, or their approving of cruelty, towards persons who are called *blasphemers*, may have a tendency to prevent *blasphemy*. But, it is pretty clear, that in this they deceive themselves; and that they will find, that they ought not to indulge in speculations upon what may be, or what may not be, the *effect* of their conduct. Every line of that gospel by which they profess to regulate their conduct, teaches the duties of forbearance in judging as well as in acting; and, above all things, forbids man to commit deliberate cruelty, whether in word or in deed.

The Christian's duty, when a charge of blasphemy is preferred against his neighbour, a charge so difficult to define, and so easily made; the Christian's duty, in such a case, and, indeed, in every other case where a charge is preferred against his neighbour, but more especially in this case, is to divest himself wholly of all self-love, of all the considerations which would make him a party in the question, before he attempt to pass judgment on his neighbour. "Judge not that ye be not judged," says the gospel.—"In righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour," says the law. Law and gospel in every line forbid unjust judgment. They forbid even hasty judgment; and the man who will at once join in the cry of blasphemy against his neighbour, will find it difficult to convince any reasonable person that he would not have joined in the stoning of NABOTH to death, and that he would have been the last amongst those who cried out for the saving of BARABBAS, and for the sending of JESUS himself to the cross! Such a man may quiet his own conscience, perhaps; but he will find it difficult to persuade the upright amongst mankind that he is worthy of respect;

and, as to his account with God, all that we know is, that he cannot there deceive by means of hypocrisy!

Has such a man forgotten that **JESUS CHRIST** himself was accused of *blasphemy*? Has he forgotten that the hypocrites accused him of being a *blasphemer*? How they bellowed out, "Now you have heard his *blasphemy*?" Has such a man forgotten that *blasphemy* was the general charge preferred against **CHRIST** and his apostles? And from what motive? Only because their teaching tended to put a stop to the plunder of the hypocrites of that day. Those whose gainful frauds **CHRIST** and his apostles detected and exposed, took care, like the nobles and judges of Samaria, *not to complain of this detection and exposure*. They affected not to have those in their eye, any more than the judges of Samaria had the vineyard of **NABOTH** in their eye. It was, however, the exposure in the one case, as it had been the vineyard in the other, which constituted the real offence. But *blasphemy* was the efficient accusation: that seized hold of popular feeling: that hardened the hearts of the people against the pretended offenders; and thus hypocrisy indulged its love of plunder under the garb of zeal for religion.

Is it not then our duty; is it not, with all these instances, all these lessons, all these admonitions of God himself before us, our bounden duty to watch well our conduct; to keep a strict guard as to our actions, and even as to our words and thoughts, when our neighbour is exhibited unto us under the hateful name of *blasphemer*? Does any Christian believe that the history of the abominations of **JEZEBEL** was put upon record by the command of God, without being intended to serve us

as a guide in cases where charges of *blasphemy* shall be preferred? Does any man, calling himself a Christian, look upon the xxist chapter of the 1st Book of Kings, and upon the ixth chapter of the 2d Book of Kings, as containing the beginning and the sequel of a sort of tragical fable, given to us for our diversion or amusement? No: he looks upon them as given to us for our instruction, to be sure; to caution us against acting as the people of Jezreel did; that is to say, against lending a ready ear to falsehoods preferred against our neighbour; and against joining in causing his destruction, when we ought to come to his assistance and support.

To *blaspheme*, in the language of Scripture, means to *speak evil of*. *Blasphemy*, used by itself, means to *speak evil of God*. This offence is perfectly monstrous. It is really out of nature. But, on that very account, we ought to be extraordinarily careful how we impute it to any one; and not less careful to ascertain the truth of the charge, when the crime is imputed by others. We are always slower to believe that our neighbour has been guilty of theft, than we are to believe that he has been guilty of any act of mere deceit in his dealings. Nothing short of the clearest evidence will induce us to believe that a man has killed his father or his mother; yet neither of these is more *unnatural* than for a man to *speak evil of God*. It is wrong, perhaps, to say that any thing can be more *unnatural* than for a son to murder his mother; yet, if it be possible, it is still more *unnatural* to *speak evil of God*; because to the latter there is *no possible temptation*; and, to do a thing, for the doing of which it is impossible to divine a motive, is something which ought not to be regarded as possible.

until there be produced proof of the fact, clear as the sun at noon-day.

With what care, then, ought we to proceed in the making, or in the giving of our countenance to, imputations of a crime so unnatural and so monstrous ! The crime is great : the greater the caution, therefore, in giving credence to its having been committed. If, indeed, we be ready prepared, like the base judges of Samaria, to believe loose and vague charges, supported by perjured witnesses, or built upon far-fetched constructions and interpretations ; then there needs no caution at all : the word *blasphemer* joined to the name of our neighbour will be sufficient to obtain the hearty concurrence to the dragging of him forth and stoning him to death. But if, bearing in our minds the denunciation of God, so often repeated, and with such awful solemnity ; if, bearing in our minds this denunciation against unjust Judges and unjust judgments ; and also bearing in mind, that against unjust Judges the blood of the innocent, the widow and the fatherless, shall cry from the earth ; if bearing these things in mind, we wish to be amongst those who shall be happy hereafter, we shall be very careful how we, by act or word, contribute, though in the smallest degree, towards the condemnation of our neighbour, until we have well and truly examined every particle of the charge against him ; until we have well weighed the probable, and even possible motive, of his accusers ; until we have arrived at a perfect conviction, that, in condemning him, we are not treading in the steps of the abominable abettors of JEZEBEL, and that we are not justly incurring the denunciation of being made food for the beasts of the forest and the fowls of the air : a denunciation, though terrible in itself, still short of what is due

to the crime of assisting the hypocrite in seeking, under the garb of sanctity, to gratify his appetite for plunder.

Let no one hope to escape the punishment due to hypocrisy by pleading that he has not himself been the false accuser of his neighbour: let him not, when he has expressly or tacitly, given his assent to the cruel deeds of hypocrisy, hope, with Pontius Pilate, to escape by exclaiming, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person: *see ye* to it." Let no one hope to escape by a subterfuge like this. Pilate saw that the judgment was unjust, and yet he assented to it in order to avoid giving offence to the prosecutors, a baser and more wicked act than which it is hardly possible to imagine. Yet this is, in fact, the act of every man who assists hypocrisy in the perpetration of its injustice and cruelty, whether that assistance be given actively, or by a silent assent. Every man, who, in any way, and from whatever motive, assents to an unjust judgment on his neighbour, acts not, indeed, precisely the part of JUDAS; but he acts the part of the Chief Priests and Elders, which was by no means less detestable: he acts the part, not exactly of JEZEBEL and the sons of Belial; but he acts the part of AHAB, and of that pusillanimous and wretched king, he richly deserves the fate. In such a case there is no neutrality. "He that is not *for* us is *against* us." Not to prevent robbery or murder, having the power to do it, is to rob or to murder: not to endeavour to prevent injustice is to be unjust; and, not to use all the means in our power to arrest the hypocrite in his cruel career is to merit that just vengeance, which God has denounced, and will not fail to execute, against hypocrisy and cruelty.

# THE SIN OF DRUNKENNESS

IN

KINGS, PRIESTS, AND PEOPLE.

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“It is not for Kings to drink wine; nor for Princes strong drink: lest they drink and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.”—PROVERBS, chap. xxxi. ver. 4, 5.

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It is but too common to find men talking much of RELIGION, and paying, at the same time, very little attention to the meaning of the word; while they wholly neglect the practice of the thing itself. Such persons seem to consider *religion* as little more than a watchword; as a sound that is intended to distinguish one class of people from another; and to think, that so long as they use the word, they need care little about the matter that it is intended to describe. It is the *having* of the Bible, and the *praising* of the Bible that such persons deem matters of importance; and not the studying of, and the adherence to, the precepts of the Bible.

But, this is not the light in which religion ought to be viewed. To practice justice, mercy, charity, and other virtues, is natural to uncorrupted and unperverted human beings. That which strengthens this natural propensity, or arrests the effect of corruption and perversion, and does this through the means of reverence for God, and an expectation of future rewards and punishments, is called RELIGION. So that religion means *virtue*, arising from considerations connected with a Supreme Being, and with hopes and fears as to another world.

*Virtue*, in the sense of the word, means *moral goodness*; and, therefore, to be religious, a man must be morally good; and, to be morally good, he must, at the least, abstain from doing that which is morally wicked. Religion calls upon him to go much further than this. It calls upon him to do all the good in his power, whether as sovereign or subject, priest or neighbour, parent or child; but, at the very least, it calls upon him to abstain from the practice of vice; and, if he obey not this call, his professions only serve to scandalize religion, and to insure his own condemnation.

Vain is the notion, that *religion* consists in believing in the truth of the doctrines of the Bible: vain is the notion that what is generally called *faith* constitutes religion. It, in fact, makes but a very small part of what constitutes religion, properly so called. The Word of God has been given for a *rule of conduct*; and religion consists in *obeying* the rule, which is the best, and, indeed, the only way, in which we can prove our faith, faith being neither more nor less than our belief in the Divine origin of the rule. "Thou believest:" says the apostle James, (ch. ii. ver. 19,) "thou doest well. The *Devils also believe*." And, alas! How many men, who nearly resemble Devils in their conduct, do we hear clamorously professing their *belief*, and persecuting, with fiend-like malice and cruelty, others whom they falsely call infidels! The same apostle, in the same chapter says, that faith without works is nothing worth; and he illustrates his meaning by putting a case where the giving of the hungry and naked a *blessing* is substituted for a gift of *food and raiment*. "Thou," he adds, "hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works; and I will show thee my faith by my works."

In estimating the religion of men, therefore, we ought to inquire what is their *conduct*, and not what is their *belief*. On the latter point we have nothing to guide us but their professions, and these may be false; but, as to the former, if our inquiry be strict and impartial, there can be no deception. And does not this rule perfectly correspond with our practice as to our own relationships in life? Whether in the capacity of master or of servant, is it not the good or bad quality of the moral character and conduct of the party that forms the subject of inquiry? Who, when forming a scheme of matrimonial connection, ever made the *faith* of the other party the chief subject of previous investigation? What man, in such a case, ever put it in the balance against chastity, industry, or even cleanliness of person?

Religion, then, means *virtue*, and virtue is evinced, not by the professions, but by the conduct, of men. As was before observed, religion calls for a great deal more than an abstinence from vice; but, at the very least, it calls for that; and, we may safely conclude, that the vicious man, the man wilfully vicious, has no real religion in his heart, and, that, if he call himself religious, he is both hypocritical and impious.

Our first care, therefore, ought to be to abstain from vice. Many there are, and must be, in every community, who have not the power of doing conspicuous good: but, it is in the power of every human being to abstain, by some means or other, from doing what he knows to be wrong; or, at the very least, to abstain from committing vice wilfully and wantonly, and even almost without temptation, which must always be the case, when he indulges

in the vice, when he, indeed, commits the sin, prohibited in the words of my text.

A great part of the misconduct of mankind and of the evils which we witness in the world, arises from the want of a clear comprehension of the nature of our duties; and this want frequently arises from our not taking sufficient pains to understand the meaning of the words by which things are designated. Nobody attempts to justify *sin*. All join in disapproving of *sin*; but few take the pains to ascertain what *sin* really is.

There prevails a sort of confused idea, that *sin* is something committed *against God*: and so it is; but the error consists in believing that the thing done is an offence against *God only*; while the fact is, that it is an offence against our neighbour, in defiance of the laws of God. Just in the same way that we offend the King in doing wrong to our fellow subjects, we offend God in doing wrong to our neighbour. In assaulting our neighbour we do no personal harm to the King. He is safe from the reach of our offensive weapons; but his laws are offended by our act; and, therefore, in his name we are punished. If the King be so far beyond the reach of our unlawful efforts, how much farther beyond them is the King of kings!

Therefore, when we talk of *sin*, we mean, if we be rational, some offence committed against our neighbour; that is to say, against some particular persons, or against the community in general; and, of all the sins, of which man can be guilty, there is perhaps none, when we consider it in all its effects, greater than that of drunkenness; and certainly none which admits of so small a degree of palliation.

To other sins, or, at least, to the greater part of other sins, there is more or less of temptation. In

cases where nature works so powerfully within us ; where reason itself is so frequently unequal to the task of resistance ; where the propensity, when thwarted, produces sometimes the total loss of sanity, and, at others, urges the unhappy victim on to self-destruction : in such cases, though we dare not *justify* the gratification of the propensity, it becomes us to judge with great caution, and to feel much more of compassion than of anger. Those acts which are committed with the view of appropriating to ourselves that which belongs to others, arise frequently from absolute want, or from a desire to avoid want. Even murder itself has, frequently, and most frequently, *want* to plead in mitigation. But, drunkenness is a man's own act ; an evil deliberately sought after ; an act of violence wilfully committed against reason, against nature, against the word and in the face of the denunciations of God ; and that, too, without the smallest temptation, except from that vicious appetite which the criminal himself has voluntarily created.

That the lowest and most degraded of mankind should yield themselves up to such a vice ought to appear surprising ; because it is a vice committed against nature herself. What, then, must be our decision as to *Kings*, who should thus debase themselves, degrade the character not only of the King but of the man, and set the commands of the Almighty at defiance, when they ought to be an example, and an ever-living light to guide the steps of their people ? Kings have been called the Vicegerents of God, that is to say, they are Magistrates, who are to govern according to his laws. How wicked, therefore, how detestable the conduct of Kings, when they are conspicuous, not as observers, but as breakers of those laws !

In the words of my text the reasons are given why Kings should "not drink wine and Princes strong drink;" and these reasons are, "lest they drink and *forget the law*, and *pervert the judgment* of any of *the afflicted*." And, when was the drunkard mindful of the law? When was he mindful to discharge his duties? When did he do justice to any? When did he ever discover a merciful disposition? When did he consider the case of the afflicted? When did he evince that he had one particle of humanity in his bosom? The sensual man is always unfeeling towards others; and this imputation more particularly applies to the drunkard and the glutton. Subjects, neighbours, wife, children; all that ought to occupy a great portion of his affections; all are cast aside to make way for his inordinate and beastly appetites.

"Woe to thee, O land, when thy King is a child, and thy Princes eat in the morning." Eccles. ch. x. ver. 16. And in the next verse we are told, that the land is blessed, "when Princes eat in due season, for strength, and *not for drunkenness*." These are words which ought to be borne in mind by all Magistrates of every description. To them it particularly belongs to guard themselves against those beastly habits, which, while they sap the foundation of health, debilitate as well as vitiate the mind. Not only the drunken man; not only the man while he is actually in drink, is incapable of fulfilling any one of the duties belonging to the Magistrate; but he is rendered, by an indulgence in this crime, incapable at all times; at every hour of his life. By habitual drunkenness he loses the power of memory, of reflecting, of reasoning, of discussing, and of drawing just conclusions. He becomes the slave, not only of his passions; for

from that slavery he might enjoy occasional release ; but the slave of stupidity and debility. His temper becomes soured. He is subject to incessant irritation. Accidental minutes must be sought for speaking to him. All becomes matter of uncertainty or of mere chance, when dependent upon his will or his co-operation.

Is it possible to imagine a being more contemptible, and at the same time more hateful than this ? Well, therefore, may the inspired writer exclaim, " Woe to thee, O land, when thy King is a child, and when thy Princes eat, not for strength but for drunkenness !" Is it not enough to fill the heart with indignation, when we behold Kings or chief Magistrates, under whatever name, answering to the description above given ? Is it not enough to excite even rage in the just mind to hear men addicted to such vices addressed with the appellation of *Majesty*, and to hear them called *most excellent*, and their persons called *sacred*, when it is notorious to the world that they are distinguished from other men more by their vices than by any excellent quality ; and that, by their chief characteristic, they are brought to a level with the brute ?

It is said of good Kings, in the East, that, of so much importance do they consider serenity of mind to a due discharge of their Kingly functions, that they *rise early*, and, even before they eat or drink, apply themselves to the consideration of the matters of most importance that are submitted to them. It is well known that eating, though you drink only water with your food, and though necessary to the sustenance of the body, is, for a time, at least, a load upon the mind. There are few men who do not well know from experience, that, in the morning, and fasting, the mind is always clearest,

more strong than at other times and better capable of reasoning correctly. It seems, then, to be no more than the bounden duty of Kings and chief Magistrates to have recourse to early rising, to fasting for a while, till the most important duties of the day are discharged; and, if this be the case, what ought to be the decision as to those, who not only neglect these means of insuring the utmost degree of serenity of mind, and of vigour of intellect; but who on the contrary, use the ample means drawn from the sweat of the people committed to their charge, for the purpose of indulging in drowsiness, sluggishness, effeminacy, gluttony and drunkenness?

To Kings and chief Magistrates are given all the means of enjoying ease and tranquillity. They possess innumerable advantages over other men. They have no cares for themselves or for their progeny. Lands, houses, equipages; every thing, which other men seek to possess, is put into their possession without the smallest degree of trouble to themselves. Their wants and wishes are all anticipated. They are armed with authority to curb the disobedient, and are furnished with treasures for the doing of acts of grace and favour. They are the fountain of honours; and there are laws to give special protection to their persons. In return for all these, do they owe nothing to the community? Can they ever do enough to discharge the debt of obligation, until they have done every good which they are capable of doing? At the least, are they not bound to abstain from wilfully doing evil; are they not bound to abstain from voluntarily rendering themselves unqualified for the discharging of their bounden duties? The Magistrate, says the Scripture, shall be a terror to evil doers, and a reward to those who do well; but in the debauched, in the drowsy, in the

effeminate Magistrate; in him who is a child in mind and a giant in profligacy; in the unfeeling drunkard and glutton, who may unhappily be clothed with regal authority, what do we see but a rewarder of evil doers and a terror to those who do well?

But, it is not to this vice, when it is found in Kings, that evil consequences exclusively belong. If it were possible to suppose any thing more odious than a drunkard with a sceptre in his hand, it would assuredly be a drunkard in clerical robes. That priests should be sober; that they should abstain from all excess, whether in eating or drinking, is so manifest; this is so clearly their duty; that there seems to require neither the authority of Scripture nor the weight of argument to uphold or enforce it. St. Paul to Titus, ch. i. ver. 7, and 8, says that a *Bishop* must be "*sober and not given to wine.*" The same is repeated in ch. iii. of the Epistle to Timothy. In this last mentioned chapter the apostle takes care to urge the necessity of sobriety in the case of teachers in general; and, indeed, though the first teachers were sent forth under numerous injunctions as to their own behaviour, that of being *sober* constantly finds a place in the commands laid upon them. They were told to preach the gospel; to be stedfast in the faith; but they were told with not less earnestness to abstain from pride, from vanity, from effeminacy, from filthy lucre; from every thing calculated to bring, by their evil example, reproach upon their calling; but more particularly were they urged to be *temperate*, to be *sober*, to abstain from *gluttony* and *drunkenness*.

Indeed, if we duly consider the matter, we shall find that the Priest, next after the King, at least, is in duty bound to abstain from excesses of every de-

scription, and particularly those under contemplation at present. For, of what avail is the preaching, if the example of the Priest give the lie to his precepts? Can it be believed that the hearers will be deterred from indulging in drunkenness, when the sermon comes from the lips of a man whom they know to be a drunkard? It will not be contended, especially by Priests themselves, that the flock do not regard the pastor as a person of understanding superior to their own; because to contend for the affirmative of that proposition, would be to declare the functions of the Priest to be useless. Of what avail, then, can the precept be, if contradicted by the example? We are told sometimes, that we are to attend to what the Priest *says*, and not to what he *does*; for that he merely tells us what is the will of God. But the hollowness of this will appear in a moment; for if the Priest tell us that we endanger our souls by getting drunk; if he call upon us, in the words of St. Paul to the Corinthians, (1 Cor. ch. v. ver. 9.) not even to *sit down at table with drunkards*; if he assure us, in the words of the same apostle, in ch. vi. ver. 10, of the same book, that drunkards shall *not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven*; and if we know that he himself is a drunkard, and that his "God is his belly;" if we know this, must we not conclude, that, at bottom, there is not so much *sin* and not so much *danger* as his words would have us believe? Him we regard as our superior in point of understanding; and can we possibly believe that, while he is warning us so earnestly against the danger of not inheriting the Kingdom of Heaven he himself is wholly insensible to that danger?

The truth is, that, in all such cases, we must come to one of two conclusions: first, that the Priest has

less understanding than ourselves ; or, second, that he is a hypocrite, a deceiver, an impostor, who holds up the Scripture, as a terror to us, while he has no belief in it himself.

The first quality, therefore, in a Priest is that of *exemplary life*. Without this his preaching is a great deal worse than vain ; for it tends directly to shake all faith in the system of religion which he is teaching. He may, as long as he pleases, tell us, that, to be good Christians, we must be humble, meek, merciful and charitable ; but, if he himself be haughty, insolent, hard-hearted, and cruel, the necessary conclusion in our minds, is, that he is either an impostor or an infidel ; and, as none of his bad actions are more likely to meet our ears than his drunkenness and his gluttony ; so in none of them is there so great a cause of scandal to religion, and of injury to the morals of the people. If it is becoming in all men, whether as neighbours, whether as masters, or parents, to look well to the effects of their example, is it not becoming in a Priest to be uncommonly scrupulous on this score ? His obligations to the community are in magnitude less than those of Kings only. He is amply provided with all the necessaries, and all the comforts of life : he has these even to superabundance at the expense of the labour of other men. The law gives him peculiar privileges. It exempts him from numerous duties, to which other men are liable ; and especially from the great and perilous duty of defending his country in arms. He is the favoured, the indulged, the pampered child of the community ; and the reason is, that he should have no excuse for falling into temptation. Such a man surely owes something to the community on the score simply of gratitude ;

and yet if his preaching be not backed by his example, instead of a good he is an evil in society.

The Priest has, too, contracted certain positive obligations with the community. He has declared, at his entering upon his office that he believed himself to be "*called thereunto, according to the will of Jesus Christ.*" He has promised that he will be "diligent in the discharge of his duties, laying aside the study of the world and the flesh." He has promised, moreover, to make himself a "*wholesome example and pattern to the flock of Christ.*" and these he has sealed by *taking the sacrament.*

Now, then, with these solemn engagements in his recollection; and knowing that he is forbidden even to sit at table with drunkards, and being assured that drunkards shall not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven, what must the Priest be, who is himself a drunkard; who is himself given to much wine, and who, while he is running over the service, is in haste only to get at the feast and the bottle? What are we to think of a Priest of this description? How are we to find terms wherein to apply to him a due portion of our reprobation? But if we abstain from censure, we may surely ask where can be the utility of such a Priest; and how such a Priest can be a bond of union and a holder together of the flock of Christ?

The fact is, that all the dissensions in the Christian Church; all the breakings off into sects; and all the consequent divisions in communities, and enmities in neighbourhoods and families arising from this cause; that all these have arisen from the negligence, the listlessness, the laziness, the various debaucheries, of the Priesthood; and especially from their drunkenness and gluttony. Their sensualities of another description have been common enough.

Greediness and cruelty have not unfrequently been prominent features in their character ; but gluttony and drunkenness, and especially the latter, are not easily disguised from the eyes of the world ; and have, therefore, had a more powerful effect than some other vices in alienating the flock from the pastor.

The mass of mankind are the creatures of habit ; they generally follow in the track of their fathers ; and to shake things long established is, therefore, difficult. Yet, the Christian world has been continually experiencing revolutions occasioned by the misconduct of the Priests. The law clothes the Priest with every thing calculated to excite reverence ; but to hear precepts of sobriety from the lips of a well known drunkard ; or precepts of fasting and abstinence from a lump of mortality weazing and choaking with fat ; these are too much for common sense to endure : they overcome the powers of habit and the injunctions of law. The flock is disgusted. It becomes infidel, or it quits the Pastor ; and this is the natural progress of things, which, in their result, if they do not justify the community, condemn the Priest.

If unbelief prevail, therefore, let it be ascribed to its true cause. If divisions take place amongst Christians ; if sects arise, and feuds and deadly animosities succeed, let the Priesthood take the blame to themselves. Laws may be made, formulas may be promulgated ; penalties may be attached to defection or non-conformity ; but in the end, reason, justice, manifest right, are too strong for them all. Men will not believe him to be a saint who lives the life of a sinner. "To make others weep," says the critic, "the poet must weep himself;" and, certainly, to make others believe in the

soundness of our teaching, we must ourselves practice what we teach. Did it ever happen, that, in order to induce his soldiers to enter the breach, the commander himself turned his back and ran away? To persuade men to labour, do we ever ourselves give striking proofs of our own laziness? To induce our children to abstain from gaming and to give them a horror of that vice, do we ourselves take them to the gaming table to see us place our fortunes upon the hazard of the die? Who, then, is to expect that a gluttonous and a drunken Parson will have a temperate and sober congregation; and, how necessary is it then, that the law-giver and the magistrate, in every community, take care that no protection, and especially that no grace or favour, be given to a Ministry whose lives are a continual example of, and a continual encouragement to, an indulgence in this too prevalent, and most pernicious vice!

After all, however, were a nation so unhappy: were it afflicted with those chosen curses, an effeminate, debauched and profligate King, and a Priesthood addicted to gluttony and drunkenness; after all, notwithstanding these vicious examples, the *people* have themselves to perform their duty. Every man has conscience to guide him, and in these days, none is deprived of access to the commands of God himself. Kings, Magistrates, Priests may set evil example; but, after all, man has an account to settle with his Maker; and in that account evil example, from whatever quarter it may have come, can never be a justification of misconduct.

The Bible, from one end to the other, enjoins temperance and sobriety. Solomon, in Prov. ch. xxiii. ver. 31., says, that the "drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty;" and in ver. 29 and

30 of the same chapter he asks, "Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath contentions? Who hath babbling? Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes?" The answer is, "*they that tarry long at the wine, they that go to seek mixed wine.*"

Never was a truer picture than this. Here are the effects and here is the cause. The drunkard, he who delights in drink, passes upon himself the sentence of poverty, and of unpitied poverty, too; he suffers all its pains and penalties without receiving and without meriting compassion; because he has sinned, as was before observed, against *nature* as well as against reason and the word of God. "*Drowsiness*," says Solomon, "shall clothe a man with rags." And of all the drowsiness and laziness that is witnessed in the world nine-tenths arise from an inordinate indulgence in drink. When once this vice has taken fast hold of a man, farewell industry, farewell emulation, farewell attention to things worthy of attention, farewell the love of virtuous society, farewell decency of manners, and farewell, too, even an attention to person: every thing is sunk by this predominating and brutal appetite.

In how many instances do we see men who have begun life with the brightest of prospects before them, and who close it without one ray of comfort or consolation, after having wasted their time in debauchery and sloth, and dragged down many innocent persons from prosperity to misery! Young men with good fortunes, good talents, good tempers, good hearts, and sound constitutions, only by being drawn into the vortex of the drunkard, have become, by degrees, the most despicable and most loathsome of mankind. At first the thing is not so visible; but in the end it is complete in its effects.

The "redness of eyes" becomes the outward and visible sign of the commencement of ruin ; and, at last, fortune and family, friends, parents, wife and children ; all are sacrificed, if necessary, to this raging and ungovernable vice. This vice creates more unhappiness in families ; is the cause of more strife between man and wife ; is the cause of more of those separations, which disgrace the married parties themselves, which send the children forth into the world humbled and tarnished, and rather than be the cause of which, a father ought to be ready to suffer, if possible, ten thousand deaths : of these fatal effects drunkenness in the husband is more frequently the cause than all other causes put together.

In the house of a drunkard there is no happiness for any one. All is uncertainty and anxiety. He is not the same man for any one day at a time. No one knows any thing of his out-goings or of his in-comings. When he will rise or when lay down to rest is wholly a matter of chance. Whether he will be laughing or sullen at his return to his house no one can tell. At some times he is one man, at other times another. His time is chiefly divided between raving and melancholy. Well might the Apostle warn his Disciples not to sit down at table with drunkards ; for, leaving the sin of drunkenness itself out of the question, what is so intolerable as the babble of a drunken man ! What so uncertain as the consequences of communication with him ! This minute he shakes you by the hand ; the next he seeks your life ; and the only recompense you receive for the injuries he inflicts, is, an acknowledgment, that, at the time of committing the injury, he had voluntarily put himself upon a level with the bruté.

Of all the afflictions in this world, there is, per-

haps, none that exceeds that of having a drunken husband; next to which comes that of having a drunken son. From the very earliest times this vice was held in the greatest abhorrence and marked out for the severest punishment. Moses, in laying down laws for the Israelites, took care to invest parents and judges with power to punish a crime, which, if suffered to go unpunished, he foresaw must be productive of the most injurious consequences to the community of which he was the law-giver. In the xxist chap. Deuteronomy, he commands the parents of a stubborn and rebellious son to bring him before the elders: "and they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son will not obey our voice; he is a *glutton and a drunkard*. And all the men of his city *shall stone him with stones that he die*: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear." Now, severe as this punishment was, who shall say, when we take into view the numerous and terrible consequences of the vice, and the total absence of all temptation to the commission of it; who shall say, when these things are considered that this punishment was too severe? Before we pronounce this judgment, let us look at the aged father and mother, at brethren and sisters, all plunged into misery by the drunkenness and consequent squandering of one stubborn, profligate and brutal member of the family. Let us only consider the number of unfortunate mothers, who, in their widowhood, have a son to whom they ought to look for consolation and support, rendered doubly miserable by that son; and, at last brought to absolute beggary by his drunkenness, drowsiness and squandering. Let us look at a mother thus situated; let us see her for years wearing herself with anx-

iety, humouring him, indulging him, apologizing for him; and at last, even when brought by him to want bread to put in her mouth, feeling not for herself but for him. We must look at a case like this; a case, unhappily, but too frequent in this day; we must look at a case like this; we must look at the crimes of such a son; at his ingratitude, his cruelty, at that hard-heartedness which has grown out of the wilful indulgence of his appetites; and we must consider that this indulgence has been in defiance of reason and of nature, before we pronounce that the punishment allotted by the law of Moses was more than commensurate to the magnitude of the crime.

However, we must not dismiss this subject without recollecting, that, even for such a son, there may, in some cases, be an apology found; not, indeed in the example of a King or in that of Priests, but in the example or in the negligence of *parents themselves*; for these have duties to perform with regard to their children, and duties, too, which justice, which good morals, and which religion imperiously demand at their hands.

They are not at liberty to say, that their children are *theirs*; and that, as in cases of other animals, they are to do what *they please* with them, and to leave undone towards them that which they please. They have no right to give life to beings, of whom they grudge to take charge, and towards whom they are not ready to act with as much zeal and tenderness as towards their own persons. If the life and happiness of a child (the child being without offence) be not as dear to the parent as the parent's own life, that parent is deficient in parental affection, and can hardly expect an affectionate and dutiful child.

In this respect, however, let us hope that few parents are deficient; but, there is something besides parental affection due from a parent towards a child, the parent has to *act* as well as to *feel*. He is to consider that which is best to be done; that which is the best course to pursue, in order to provide, not only for the existence and health of his child, but also for his future welfare, and in welfare is included his good moral conduct. It is very certain that children are, in general, prone to follow, and with great exactness, the example of their parents. Where is the father whose sons have not told him, one after another, at the age of three years old, that they shall be big men *like him*; that they shall do this or that *like him*? Where is the father that has not watched, and been very much pleased at their constant attempts to *imitate him*? and who has not observed their contentions as to which was most *like him*?

Now, it is impossible not to see in these things, which are notorious to all the world, the clearest proof, that, with children, the example of parents always is powerful, and may be rendered, in nine cases out of ten, productive of the happiest consequences to both parents and children. If it be the ambition of the son, even from his earliest days, to *be like* and *do like* the father, how careful ought the father to be of all his words and all his actions! Nature may possibly produce a son so untoward as to become a drunkard after having been bred up by a sober father and in scenes of perfect sobriety: but this is a sort of monster in morals, and is to be excluded from all the reasonings appertaining to the subject. Nothing is truer than the rule of SOLOMON, "train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from

it." But, in this case, as well as in the case of Priest and flock, it is the *example*, and not the precept, upon which we ought to rely. By precept you may teach your son that drunkenness is sinful and leads to misery; but the precept will have little force when contradicted by your example. You may preach, you may warn, you may menace; but if you indulge in the bottle yourself, expect not a sober son, and complain not if he bring your grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.

Example in this case costs nothing, either in the way of money or of personal exertion. It is merely an abstaining from that which is in itself unnatural. It is recommended also by economy, by a love of domestic peace, and by a desire to consult the convenience, and to promote the happiness of a family. Drinking and carousing is not productive of *cheerfulness*; and it is cheerfulness, and not boisterous mirth, that we ought to desire for our inmate. Nobody is so dull as the day-before drunkard; no mansion so gloomy as that which beholds the morrow of a feast. "Nabal's heart was merry within him; *for he was very drunken*;" but the next morning, *when the wine was gone out of Nabal, his heart died within him and he became dead as a stone*. This is the true picture of the two states of the drunkard, and well represents the effects of drinking and carousing in a family.

Therefore, even as relating to the management and the happiness of a household, an abstinence from drinking strong drink, or any thing which intoxicates, is a duty. And, when the effect upon children is taken into view, how sacred is their duty!

Many are the parents, who, under afflictions occasioned by a son addicted to drunkenness; many

are such parents, who, after fruitless attempts at reclaiming him, after vain endeavours to disguise the cause of their trouble from the world, confess, in the bitterness of their sorrow, that it would have been better had they followed him to the grave at a moment when perhaps they were shedding tears of joy at his recovery from some dangerous disease! And, if such parents have well and truly discharged their duty towards him, unfeeling indeed must be the heart that can refrain from participating in their sorrow. But, if his boyish days have been spent amidst scenes of drinking; if the parents have made him a hearer of glees and songs in praise of the heroes of the bottle; if the decanter have been the companion of the daily domestic repasts of his youth; if, by his own parents, his natural appetite have thus been perverted; if, by them, he have been initiated in the school of drinking, their sorrows are the natural consequence and the just punishment of their own disregard of duty towards him.

There are few crimes, few offences against morals, which do not, in the end, bring their own punishment, even in this world. The thief, the robber, the murderer, the corrupt legislator, the unjust judge, the perjured juror, the tyrant king; each usually receives his due, in one way or another, before he is called to commune with the worms. But the punishment of the drunkard is not only certain to follow the offence, but it follows immediately. That which he swallows for what he calls his pleasure brings the pain as surely as the night brings the morning. Poverty and misery are in the train; a disgraceful and loathsome state of existence closes the scene; and when the besotted and bloated body is at last committed to the earth, not a

tear, not a sigh is drawn forth even from parents or children. It has been deemed subject of deep lamentation when death is unaccompanied with the solitudes of friends and relations. There is scarcely a human being so unfortunate as not to leave some one to regret that he is no more. But the drunkard makes no void in society, except that of a nuisance, the removal of which is calculated to excite no other feeling than that of satisfaction.

Let us remember, therefore, that, while it is the duty of Kings and of Priests to abstain from wine and from strong drink, it is also a duty which belongs to ourselves; that if they set an evil example, we have reason, nature, and the word of God for our guide; and, that, if we, as neighbours, friends, relations, masters or parents, neglect our duty in this respect, we merit all the reproach, and all the punishment, that are so justly due to drunkard Kings and Priests. We are called upon, in this case, to *do* nothing. Abstinence requires no aid to accomplish it. Our own will is all that is requisite; and, if we have not the will to avoid contempt, disgrace and misery, we deserve neither relief nor compassion.

# FALL OF JUDAS;

OR,

## GOD'S VENGEANCE AGAINST BRIBERY.

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"Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and, falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out."—Acts, chap. i. ver. 18.

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**BRIBERY** is the giving, or the taking of money, or some other thing of value, real or imaginary, as an inducement, or reward, to do, or to cause to be done, some act which the parties know to be wicked; and, while there are few things more detestable than this in their nature, there are still fewer which have, in the affairs of mankind, effects so extensively mischievous. Yet, as in the case of drinking and gaming, the frequency of the crime renders it less generally and strongly reprobated than it ought to be; though, if we duly consider it, either in its nature or in its consequences, we shall find that we are criminal, not only if we, directly, or indirectly, give it our countenance, but if we neglect any means within our power to expose it to hatred and to bring down upon it some portion, at least, of that vengeance which the Scriptures teach us is its due.

Bribery must always be a *deliberate* act, a *wilful* sin, a deed committed against the loudly and distinctly expressed admonitions of conscience. Various are the particular motives by which the wretches who *give* bribes are actuated; but, he who receives a bribe is actuated, and always must be actuated by the base motive of *lucre*. Here are, indeed, the

tempter and the tempted; but, so foul is the crime, that it is difficult to say, that the former is more criminal than the latter. In many cases the tempter is by far the most criminal; the deluder or instigator far more wicked than he who yields to the temptation, because there are many cases, where the tempted party is taken by surprise; taken at a moment when he is off his guard; urged by hasty passion; misled by feelings in themselves amiable; deceived by false appearances. In these cases common charity finds an excuse for those who yield to temptation; but, he who takes a bribe, does it deliberately, does it with his eyes open; coolly calculates the money's worth of his crime; makes up his mind as to the price of his intended iniquity; determines to sell his soul, and carries it to market. In such a traffic it is impossible to make a distinction between the parties: the wretch who buys is, indeed, as worthy of detestation as the wretch who sells; but, as the latter is worthy of the deepest, the former can be worthy of no more; and, at the hands of a God of justice, they must receive the same measure of punishment.

The conduct of the chief Priests, in the case of the traitor Judas, was inexpressibly base; but, it was not *more* base than that of Judas, who, like many, many others, offered his soul for sale. One or the other of the parties must make the offer; but, as to the magnitude of the crime, it signifies little which of them it is. To be sure, in this case of Iscariot, the circumstances were singularly shocking. The follower, the professed disciple, one of the chosen and honoured twelve, goes to the known deadly enemies of his gentle, kind, benevolent, unoffending Master, and asks them *how much they will give him* to betray that Master into their hands?

They offer him a *bribe* of thirty pieces of silver. He takes the bribe; becomes the *spy* of these hypocritical pretenders to piety; and the sign, by which he points his Master out to the low and hardened myrmidons of the persecutors, is a *kiss*, the token of fidelity and affection! The spy and traitor knows, that the death, the ignominious death of his innocent and generous Master is to be the consequence; but, still he coolly perseveres: he has taken a *bribe*; and, having been capable of *that*, remorse could find no place in his bosom. But, God's justice was not tardy in overtaking him. He purchased a field with the wages of his perfidy; and, upon that very spot "he fell headlong, and all his bowels gushed out;" a lesson to spies and traitors to the end of the world. His accomplices in guilt, his employers and payers were divested of their power; and the *nation* who were so base as to wink at the crime, were scattered over the face of the earth; destined to be in every country and to be owned by no country; doomed to be accumulators of wealth, and to be, at the same time, the scorn even of the beggar.

But, though this particular act of bribery was so completely horrible in all its circumstances, we must take care not to suppose, that *precisely such* circumstances, or that any *horrible* circumstances, are absolutely necessary to make the crime of bribery detestable and worthy of punishment even equal to that of Judas and the Jews. The very act of giving, or of taking a bribe, implies an *intention* in the party to *do evil*; and, though, when the bribe be the price of human blood, our very nature calls on us for an uncommon portion of horror to be felt at the conduct of the criminals; though, when one man deliberately gives, and another as deliberately

receives, money, or promises, the exchange against which is to be the death, or ruin, of some one, the love, or confidence of whom the bribed wretch is known to possess; though, in such a case, our loudest and bitterest execrations justly fall on the hands of the cool blood-seeking offenders, we must not, for a moment, suppose that there are cases, where bribery does *not* demand our detestation and abhorrence, any more than we must suppose, that, because murder is worthy of death, maiming is worthy of no punishment at all.

The Scripture takes care to warn us against this error; for, it holds up to our detestation bribery of every description, and bribery of no kind more distinctly and earnestly than that kind which works its way to our neighbour through a circuitous and general channel; and which destroys the peace and happiness of the community by corrupting the sources of law and of justice. When SAMUEL became old, he set his sons to judge, that is to say, to be rulers or guides, or chief magistrates to the Israelites. But (1 Sam. ch. 8, ver. 3.) his sons "*took bribes and perverted judgment.*" That is to say, made partial laws and regulations. Whereupon the Israelites demanded a *King*, in imitation of the neighbouring nations. They were remonstrated with upon this demand; Samuel told them of the sufferings and degradations that this would bring upon them. The answer to that eloquent, beautiful and affecting appeal which he made to them after SAUL was made king, clearly shows how much they revered him. "Behold," says he, "*here I am* : witness against me before the LORD and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I

*received any bribe* to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it to you.—And, they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken aught of any man's hand." 1 Sam. ch. xii. ver. 3, and 4.

Nevertheless, though they thought as highly of his wisdom as they did of that rare integrity, which had made him give up his own corrupt sons, they persisted in demanding a king, even after he had placed before their eyes the divers acts of despotism which a king would assuredly commit. They knew what was to befall them; but, even despotism, with all its burdens, all its arrogance and all its insolence, they welcomed as a means of freeing them from that tantalizing curse; the oppression of partial laws and a partial administration of public affairs: a mockery of freedom and of justice, carried on through the corrupt influence of *bribes*, taken by hypocrites clothed in authority.

Bribery is every where, in Holy Writ, marked down amongst the most hateful of public offences. Amos, (ch. v. ver. 10, 11, 12, and 13) well describes the state of things where bribery prevails. "*They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly.* Forasmuch, therefore, as your treading is *upon the poor*, and ye take from him burdens of wheat; ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them. For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins; they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right. Therefore, the *prudent shall keep silence* in that time; for it is an evil time."

Thus it ever is: a state of things in which bribe-

ry prevails, necessarily consists, in part, of cruel oppression, and especially on the weak, or defenceless, or as here denominated, the *poor*. A necessary consequence, danger of complaining of such oppression; and, hence the prophet observes, that, in such a state of things, the *prudent will be silent*: which may well be called the last stage of human endurance and degradation; for, to suffer, however acutely, is a trifle, compared with the necessity of smothering one's groans; a species of torture which has never been put in practice, except in a state of things where bribery was the pivot of power.

"Gather not," says David, (Psalm, xxvi. ver. 8 and 9) "my soul with sinners, nor my life with *bloody* men, in whose hands is mischief, and *their right hand is full of bribes*." Thus it ever is: the man who can be guilty of *bribery*, is capable of any act of wickedness. Blood may, in some cases, not be necessary to effect his designs; but the man, who will either give or take a bribe is capable of shedding innocent blood rather than not effect his purposes. His heart must be *corrupt* in the first, and it must have become *perfectly callous*, before he can, to the face of another man, give or take, a bribe. ISAIAH adds his authority to that of DAVID. He describes the *good* man thus: "He that speaketh uprightly; he that *despiseth the gain of oppressions*, that *shaketh his hands from the holding of bribes*, and that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood; he shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks."

In this beautiful passage, too, we find *oppression* and *bloody-mindedness* associated with *bribery*; and, it really does seem, that they are inseparable, and that, while oppression and cruelty cannot be carried to any great extent without *bribery*, this last can

never be practised extensively without producing the two former.

Hateful, therefore, as the thing is in itself, it becomes still more hateful when we take its *consequences* into view. When we reflect on the state of depravity, at which men must have arrived, before they can open to each other a transaction, the very name of which acknowledges infamy in the actors, how are we to refrain from abhorring the wretch guilty of the offence? In other crimes, accomplices fall gradually into each other's views; they undertake, and only undertake; and are involved in the sin frequently without perceiving the extent. But, in the case of bribery, the two parties meet; they negotiate, looking each other in the face by the light of God's sun; and they coolly make and ratify a *bargain*, which stamps villain on the front of both. Bribery, nine times out of ten, includes a breach of *trust*, or *confidence*: it is an act of perfidy, bought on the one side and sold on the other; and that, too with the clear foreknowledge of its producing, first or last, wrong to some part or other of the rest of mankind. But, still, we have but an imperfect idea of its wickedness till we come to contemplate its consequences; till we consider the evils it brings in its train; the oppressions, the acts of cruelty, the ruin, the misery, the destruction of individuals, the disgrace and overthrow of nations, the rivers of human blood, which, through its means, are poured out on the sacrilegious altar of ambition and avarice. Luxury and effeminacy bring their evils; superstition has also its scourge in its hand; pride, folly, indolence, ignorance and insolence, have their chastisements for the nation that indulges in them; but, let *bribery* once take root: let its corrupting fibres once get

fast hold ; let its branches spread abroad, and all becomes poison and rottenness : the nation is doomed to suffer long and much ; and even half-destruction becomes a blessing, if it rid a people of the degrading and intolerable curse.

Let us not, however, be content with this rather general view of the matter, and seem to consider it as a thing, with regard to which *we ourselves* have nothing to do. Let us rather, every man, look well into his own conduct ; and, judging impartially, settle the important point ; whether *we* are in anywise blameable as to this matter. For, nations are composed of individuals : if no individual were corrupt, all would be sound. Bribery requires two parties to give it its consummation ; and, if there were none to take, there could be none to give, bribes ; and, hence it has been held by some, that where corruption of this kind prevails, the greater part of the fault lies with those who *take* bribes. In truth, however, there is no difference at all in the two. Both commit the act for their own selfish purposes ; and neither is so ignorant as not to know, that the act is unjust and infamous.

It is a fatal error, if, in such a case, there can be error, to suppose, that because we do nothing more than take the probably pitiful bribe ; because we stop there ; because we cannot clearly trace it to all its consequences, we are, therefore, harmless, and that the sin of the consequences rests only on the head of those who have an immediate hand in producing those consequences. We know the act to be wicked ; we know that the bribe is given for the purpose of having the power to do that which is wrong ; for the purpose of getting at a something, which, in the end, must naturally be injurious to our neighbour, or our country, which is only an-

other word to express our neighbour. We know this, and there needs nothing more to deter us from taking a bribe. Power, no matter of what description, acquired by bribery, must have *evil for its object*; and, therefore, in the taking of a bribe, and in the aiding and abetting any one in the acquisition of power in exchange for such bribe, we make ourselves answerable, in the eye of reason and of religion, for all that he may perpetrate in consequence of being possessed of that power. Evil must necessarily arise out of evil. The "corrupt tree must bring forth evil fruit;" and a share of the fruit falls to every one, who, in any manner or degree, assists in planting or fostering the tree.

According with these principles are the awful denunciations of God, whose word pronounces condemnation more especially on the *takers* of bribes. Indeed the whole herd of givers and takers are sometimes spoken of and put into one mass of horrible malefactors; but, at any rate, no distinction is made in favour of *takers*. In Job, ch. xv. ver. 34. "The congregation of *hypocrites* shall be desolate, and *fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery*." Now, with men (if there really be such) who are *blasphemers*, with men who *disbelieve the Scriptures*; with men *who ridicule revelation*; with such, this denunciation *may* be treated lightly. But, will any of those who call the Bible the *word of God*, despise this denunciation; will they say, that a bribe may, in certain cases, be taken, *without* incurring the vengeance of God? Such men there *may* possibly be; it is *possible*, that there are men who affect to look upon themselves as the elect, as endued with particular grace, as under the immediate guidance of the holy spirit, and who boast of a direct communication with heaven. It is possi-

ble, that there may be men, pretending to all these religious advantages, and who, at the same time, not only think lightly of bribery, but actually give and take bribes; and, if there really be such men, all that one can say is, that, to the most detestable of wickedness in practice, they join, in professions, the most loathsome hypocrisy. Such men are not only a scandal to religion, but a dishonour to human nature, and their erect attitude of body is a disgrace to the human form. There are monsters of the visionary as well as of the substantial creation; but, what monster ever existed in either equal to the inward man swoln with the grace of God and the outward man fingering a bribe?

It is worthy of remark, that, in almost every instance where *bribery* is mentioned in the Scriptures, *hypocrisy* also finds a place. They are, indeed, constant associates. They are twin sisters. The hypocrite in religion will stick at nothing that is base, or cruel; and the baseness seems always the sweeter to him if seasoned with cruelty. Therefore, to bribe, or be bribed, is in the regular course of one who is a hypocrite in religion; while he who is capable of bribery is capable of any act of dissimulation, and a false pretence of religion is necessary to him as a *disguise*. People of this description should have the hatred and the hostility of all the sound part of mankind. They are amongst the very greatest enemies of the human race. One of them is the cause of more mischief in the world than fifty bands of thieves; for the hypocritical briber or bribed is a scourge that reaches whole nations: compared to an intercourse with him, the robbers' den is a school of honesty and the brothel a seminary of purity. Even the open, the daring, the shameless briber is less detestable than he who

assumes the garb of piety, as the bravo, whose trade is portrayed on his visage, is less detestable than the cool, sly, placid-looking, simpering killer who wins from the thoughtless the character of *mildness*, while his whole soul is bent on blood; who does not agitate and waste himself by threats and denunciations: who employs no sounds to frighten off his victim; who, reversing the remark of the poet, "does not *speak* daggers, but *uses* them."

Sin, in all cases, endeavours to *disguise itself*. Satan is too crafty to present the wages of perdition in its naked form. A bribe, like poison, is frequently tendered, and as frequently asked for, under shapes that are calculated to disguise its real character from the eyes of common beholders. But, any benefit; profit, gain, advantage, or a *promise* to bestow any of these, no matter of what kind, in exchange for an evil act, no matter of what description, to be committed by another, is, to all intents and purposes, a *bribe*. In the case of *Judas* it was *money*, counted down: it was the thirty pieces of silver given into the spy and traitor's hand; but, if the Chief Priest had obtained the same act from him by a promise of providing for him, or for his children or relations, the sin would not have been less detestable or less deadly. The act would still have been the same, and the same would have been the motive. Indeed, this latter mode of bribing is the most dangerous, because less open and less liable to be detected, checked and punished, and more likely to creep on, till, by degrees, it has infected the whole community. The wretches who take money-bribes, as well as those who give them, are known and detested. They take their place in the ranks of infamy. They, like common prostitutes and common vagrants, make no disguise of

their practices. They are marked out as wretches to be shunned. Like common prostitutes, seeing that they are held in abhorrence, they make a jest of their infamy. But the crafty, the under-working sons of corruption endeavour to disguise, and but too often succeed in disguising, their real character and conduct from the eye of the world. They thrive by bribery, and the world does not perceive the cause of their thriving. They do not give and receive the bribe in money: the payment of the wages of perfidy is not direct and visible; but the payment comes, in the end, and the bribery is as complete in its character as that of Iscariot himself.

It is a poor excuse for a man to say, that he does not offend the *laws*, in a case like this. How many injuries can men commit against their neighbours, and yet keep within the verge of any laws that man can devise! If I, having the power to do an act to serve my neighbour, or my country, (for they are the same,) *fail* to do that act, in consequence of any *expectation* or *hope*, or even *wish*, that some *benefit* will arise to me from this failure in my duty, I am my own briber, my motive is corrupt, and I am not entitled to exemption from the vengeance due to bribery. My conduct tends, and it has in view, to benefit myself at the expense of my neighbour. *Oppression* of my neighbour is the natural, and even the known consequence of my conduct; and, throughout the Scriptures we find *bribery* and *oppression* inseparable associates. "Whom have I *oppressed*? From whose hand have I taken a *bribe*," says the righteous SAMUEL. "The upright man," says ISAIAH, "despiseth the *gain of oppressions*, he shaketh his hands from the *holding of bribes*." AMOS says, that the *bribers* "*afflict the just, and turn aside the poor in the gate from their*

*right."* DAVID joins *bribery* and *cruelty* together as necessary companions. And thus it certainly is, take the world throughout. Where there is bribery, there you will find oppression; and the extent of the latter is invariably in due proportion to the extent of the former. Reason tells us, that it must be thus; for, who is to pay the wages of iniquity? Who is to remunerate the bribed for his perfidy? Who is to pay the price of his soul? *Not the bribers*; for, in that case, he could not gain by the transaction. He must throw the burden of *payment* on somebody else. He does, indeed, drive the bargain, make the purchase of the corrupt soul, advance the money or make the promise; but, it is from somebody else that the payment is *finally* to come: the means to compensate the mercenary seller is to come out of the fruit of the sweat of *other men's brows*. The crafty and greedy wretch, who expends a pound in bribery, does it with a view of gaining a thousand fold; and, to effect this, oppress somebody he necessarily must. Indeed, nine times out of ten, a bribe is neither more nor less than the *purchase money of the power to oppress*.

When, therefore, we behold men, selling, under any shape whatever, this power, we are bound to hold them in abhorrence, to hold no intercourse with them; to mark them out as reprobate, and to do all that in us lies to impede their course. Our duty towards God demands, that we shun such wretches as we would flee from the plague; and our duty towards our neighbour demands, that we use our utmost endeavours to detect them and brand them with infamy. Their gain is the loss of good men: their prosperity spreads misery over the land; their enjoyment is a nation's curse.

**And, what has the taker of a bribe to offer in**

the way of *excuse* for his conduct? What justification, what apology has he to offer for receiving the wages of iniquity; for selling to another *the power to oppress his neighbours*? What subterfuge has Satan suggested to him wherewith to quiet his conscience, and make him believe, that God's vengeance will not overtake him, though so distinctly and emphatically pronounced upon his guilty head. Where can he find a refuge from that shame which pursues him like his shadow? How does he find the assurance to hold up his head and to walk erect in the presence of other men?

After having in vain sought for loop holes in religion and morality; after having exhausted all the resources of chicanery, the wretch guilty of bribery resorts to the old, stale, hacknied excuse, that *others do the same*! What, then, and, because others rob and murder, will you rob and murder? For, these you might do with a conscience not more foul than that which permits you to bribe and be bribed. *Others?* who are those *others*? They are men as well as you, and no more; and doubtless, they appeal to your example, as you to do to theirs; and thus whole crowds of thieves and man-slayers might find a justification in the fact that each has followed the example of all the rest. The augmentation of the number of bribers or of bribed does by no means diminish the guilt and infamy of the individuals. If the briber were to collect and range the base takers of bribes into companies and regiments; were to draw them up in rank and file, two deep or ten deep; were to go from rank to rank and from file to file with his muster-roll and his purse in hand; were to dole out to every individual the sum agreed upon as the price of his corruption; would the portion of infamy appertaining to each

of the soul-selling band be diminished by his being thus ranged and thus paid amongst numerous associates? Would not all his own share of shame and sin still adhere to him as firmly as it would were he paid in a corner, or if the bribe found its way into his hand through a hole in the wall, or from the hand of a briber, dressed in masquerade or hidden behind a curtain?

And, as to bribers, do they, who have given the price of power to oppress, injure, rob, insult, domineer over their neighbours; do they shift off any part of their crime by congregating; by getting together in a crowd? On the contrary, their power of oppressing and robbing being augmented by collecting the individual portions of it into a mass, a phalanx of bribers is of a character still more detestable, if possible, than that of an individual briber. As long, indeed, as they were in divan; as far as would relate to their intercommunication, they might keep each other in countenance, like the members of a banditti or those of a brothel. As towards each other they would be guilty of no wrong-doing. But, as towards the rest of mankind; as towards the laws and ordinances of God, the guilt of each individual would remain to him for his possession, though none of his associates were to think the worse of him for it, and though the crime itself were as notorious as the sun at noon day.

In vain does the wretch, guilty of bribery, seek shelter from infamy in the example of *ages*. Murderers seek such shelter in vain. That there have always been bribers in the world we know from history; but, we also know, that this is no justification of the briber, or bribe-taker of the present day. It needs must be, says ST. PAUL, that offences will

come; but woe be unto him by whom the offence cometh. That bribing was in practice in the days of Samuel we have on record that cannot err; but, in the book of Job we are told, that "*fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery;*" and, if we allow most largely for figurativeness of expression here, the words must mean, that it is the will of God, that bribery shall be punished, as far as man has the power of punishment, in the most severe and signal manner. We find in Holy Writ no apology, no excuse, no mitigation, as to this atrocious offence. We find no attempt on the part of the bribers or bribe-takers to justify their conduct on the plea that there had *always been bribery* in the world: and when the bribing wretches of the present day can find a justification in the antiquity of the crime, the murderer will find a justification in the example of Cain, and the malignant persecutors in the example of the devil himself.

But, we must not dismiss this subject without a remark or two upon the *duties of society* with regard to the wretches abandoned to this detestable and oppression-creating crime. We see clearly the will of God as to bribers and bribe-takers: but, we ourselves are to act in accordance with that will. We cannot, indeed, cause fire to consume the tabernacle of bribery; but we can do, and ought to do many things, with regard to the guilty and odious wretches, which we but too often leave undone. It is our duty not to give countenance, on any account, to bribers or bribe-takers, even silently, much less ought we to give a sort of sanction to their crime by treating them, or speaking of them, with respect.

The Psalmist has clearly taught us our *first* duty with regard to these corrupt wretches. "Gather not

my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men, in whose hands is mischief, and *whose right hand is full of bribes.*" We are, then, at the very least, to keep aloof from them. We are not to associate with them. We are, every one of us according to his power, to set a mark of reprobation upon them. We are to warn our children, our brethren, our friends and neighbours against an intercourse so clearly tending to contamination, as well as so manifestly offensive to God. To associate with these wretches; to live with them as with other men; to treat them as it is our duty to treat the innocent and virtuous, is to be guilty of self-abasement, and, which is worse, to give countenance to a sin, mischievous to society and marked out as an object of the wrath of God. We are warned, and with great propriety, not to associate with drunkards, with thieves and with murderers; but, it may be safely asserted, that associating with these, not excepting even the latter, is less dangerous, that is to say, leads to less evil in the end, than associating with the children of bribery; for, here the seeds of the most deadly corruption are sowed, and their fruit consists of every evil with which mankind can be afflicted. Oppression is the immediate consequence of bribery; oppression produces misery; and misery every species of crime. Fathers, if you would see your children virtuous and happy, keep them far away from the tabernacles of bribery; teach them to loathe the wretch, who has purchased the soul of another, or sold his own. Judas was a perjurer and traitor as well as a taker of bribes; and, what Judas was, such is every man guilty of bribery.

Nor is our hatred and contempt of the briber, or the taker of bribes, to be confined, in their effects,

to merely keeping aloof from men so abandoned to work iniquity. To know of treason against our earthly sovereign and not to endeavour to bring punishment on the traitor, is, in the eye of the law, an offence punishable even with *death*. To know of an act of murder, and not to denounce the murderer, is, in the eye of the same law, to be an accessory in his horrid crime. This law is founded in reason and justice; for, by screening these malefactors by means of our silence, we give countenance and encouragement to the commission of the crimes of treason and murder. Does it become us, then, to be *silent* in the case of bribery known to us? Does it become us to give, in this way, countenance and encouragement to a crime, which, though not equal to treason or murder in point of horridness, surpasses them both in ultimate evil, seeing that it necessarily leads to the overthrow of civil society, and to the involving of the community in misery and crimes? This does not become us. It is, on the contrary, a duty imperative upon us, to detect, expose, reprobate, and execrate, as far as our knowledge of the facts go, all who are abandoned to this detestable offence; this cause of all minor corruptions; this dry-rot of States; this destroyer of all morality and happiness, private and public; this "*the accursed thing*," which, until it be cast forth from the camp, leaves a moment's repose to none but the base trafficker in bribes.

In such a case, however, our indignation and reprobation are not sufficient, if we have more at our command. "A corrupt tree," says our Saviour, (Matthew, chap. 7, ver. 17.) "bringeth forth evil fruit;" and, in ver. 19, he says, "every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is *hewn down* and *cast into the fire*." Something more, therefore, than words,

something more than *wishes*, is necessary, in such a case. Precisely what we ought to *do* must depend upon our own capacity as well as upon the nature of the circumstances, and the occasion. But, apprized, as we are, of the magnitude of the evil; knowing as we do the consequence of the crime; tasting as all men must of the bitter fruit whenever this tree of corruption flourishes, it must be the bounden duty of every man to employ all the means in his power to hew it down, or to tear it up by the roots. His duty to the community of which he is a member; his duty to those children to whom he has given life, and over whose morals and welfare nature bids him keep constant watch; and, above all, his duty to God, who has given him the earth to inherit, and reason to be his guide, command him to labour with all his heart, with all his soul and his strength in the destruction of this baneful tree.

What must we think then, if there be men found in the world, endowed with more than an ordinary portion of mental power, capable of using that power, and that, too, with indefatigable zeal, in justifying, and even eulogizing, the hateful crime, the commission of which brought indignation on the sons of the pious and revered SAMUEL, and which God has said shall bring fire to consume the tabernacles of the criminals? But, thus it is that bribery works its way. It purchases first the power of oppressing; it obtains the "gain of oppressions;" and with that gain it purchases defenders of itself. In its progress it corrodes and poisons all that ought to contribute to the safety and happiness of man. It perverts the judgment; it enfeebles the public mind; it gives predominance to ignorance and fraud; it lays the foundation of that total ruin

which must, sooner or later, fall upon the community.

Yet, worse, more wicked, more detestable, even than such openly prostitute abusers of their mental faculties, are those, who assume the garb of godliness for the purpose of abetting, and covertly profiting in, the commission of acts of bribery. This is the very tip top twig of the tree of iniquity. Here, if to be found on earth, is real *blasphemy*. Here is a settled design to do injury to man and to make a mockery of God. Many and horrid are the acts of wickedness committed in the world; acts in defiance of all law human and divine; but, in his whole course, does the sun cast his rays upon a wretch so detestable as he, who, with the Bible in his hand, and with piety on his lips, undeviatingly pursues through life the path of oppression, practised through the means of bribery; who coolly and with inward delight enjoys the fruits of his corruption; and, dying, bequeaths his hypocrisy as an inheritance to his children? SAMUEL'S sons were abashed, and skulked from their high office: even Iscariot had some compunction; but, the habitual, the hypocritical briber, or bribe-taker, becomes, in time, wholly bereft of conscience: fire may consume his tabernacle; he may fall headlong; his bowels may tumble forth; but remorse, even at his latest gasp, finds no way to his filthy soul. Like Judas he goes to his "proper place," where he finds, that, though hypocrisy gave him impunity with man, there is a God to inflict vengeance on bribery.

# THE RIGHTS OF THE POOR,

AND THE

## PUNISHMENT OF OPPRESSORS.

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"Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail: saying, When will the new moon be gone that we may sell corn? And the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the Ephah small and the Shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit; that we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat? Shall not the land tremble for this; and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? I will turn your feasting into mourning, saith the Lord God, and your songs into lamentations."—Amos, ch. viii. ver. 4 to 10.

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SEEING that man is what we find him to be, the existence of *poverty* seems indispensable, whether a people be in a wild or in a civilized state. God does not actually furnish us with food and raiment: he only tenders us the means of furnishing ourselves with even the bare necessities of life. He sends the fowls, the fishes, the beasts, the fruits, the trees, the rocks; but, before we can apply them to our sustenance or our covering, we must *perform labour upon them*. The means are, indeed, most abundantly supplied; labour is sure to be paid a hundred fold for every movement it duly makes; but, still there must be *labour* performed before any thing in the way of food or raiment can be obtained.

Man, and, indeed, it is the same with every living thing, delights in *ease*; and labour, though conducive to health, and, therefore, in the *end*, to pleasure, does, in itself, partake of the nature of *pain*: it fatigues the body, or the mind, and, therefore, to

cause it to be performed a motive is requisite, and a motive, too, sufficient to outweigh the natural love of ease. In proportion as the labour is of a nature to cause fatigue, to give pain, to place the body in a state of risk, the motive to undertake and perform it must be strong. And *the fear of poverty*; that is to say, the fear of being destitute of food and raiment, appears to be absolutely necessary to send the savage forth to hunt for the flesh of the deer and the skin of the bear, and to induce men to perform all the various functions necessary to their support in civil society, and not less necessary to the existence of civil society itself.

This motive is, too, the great source of the virtues and the pleasures of mankind. Early-rising, sobriety, provident carefulness, attentive observation, a regard for reputation, reasoning on causes and effects, skill in the performance of labour, arts, sciences, even public spirit and military valour and renown, will all be found, at last, to have had their foundation in *a fear of poverty*; and, therefore, it is manifest, that the existence of poverty is indispensably necessary, whether a people be in a wild or in a civilized state; because without its existence mankind would be unpossessed of this salutary fear.

But we are not to look upon poverty as necessarily arising from the *fault* of those who are poor, there being so many other causes continually at work to produce poverty amongst every people. The man who is born an idiot, or who has been stricken blind by lightning, and who, in consequence of either of these calamities, is destitute of the means of obtaining food and raiment, is poor without any *fault*. Feebleness of frame, ailments of the body, distress of mind, may all pro-

duce poverty without fault in the afflicted party. There may be misfortunes, the impoverishing effects of which no human industry, care or foresight could have prevented: Poverty may arise through the faults of parents. In all such cases the poor are clearly entitled to the compassion, the tender consideration, the active charity, out of which relief instantly springs. Nay, even when poverty manifestly proceeds from unhappy disposition, from untractable temper, from our own passions, it ought not to be visited with a very severe chastisement. And as to starvation and nakedness, they are too heavy a punishment for any *crime* short of wilful murder.

This being the view, which common sense, which natural justice, which the unenlightened mind of even the savage in the wilderness, takes of the matter, what are we to think of those, too many of whom are, alas! to be found, who, in the possession of a superabundance of good things of all kinds, affect to make the bare fact of poverty a presumption of the existence of crime; who drive the poor from the gate; and who, in the insolence arising from that opulence which ought to make them grateful to God and kind to man, not only deny the poor to be their brethren, but look on them, speak of them, and, in some respects treat them, as a distinct and degraded kind of beings? And, if this insolence fills us with indignation and calls aloud for punishment, are even the thunders of Omnipotence too terrible for those, who thus think and act, while they are adding to their opulence by means like those described in the words of my text? Here is *oppression*. This is the very worst of oppression too, because practised by *fraudulent* means.

If robbery, in all its forms, is wicked; if robbery of even the most wealthy merits the chastisement of the law, and is, by the laws of a community, punished with *death*, what must those deserve who rob the labouring man, make him poor by means of robbery committed on him, and then treat him as a slave? The *Ephah* was the *measure* by which wheat was sold; the *Shekel*, a piece of money of gold or silver. The oppressors, spoken of by the prophet Amos, and against whom God's vengeance was by him denounced, *diminished the measure*, while they *augmented the price*. By the aid of this double-handed fraud; by the aid of false balances, and that of vending, at the same time, the refuse of the wheat, they would soon reduce the defenceless labourer to beggary, and that would naturally be succeeded by his abject slavery; they would soon "*buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes.*"

"Shall not the *land tremble for this?*" Aye, and justly too. With justice will the *feastings* of the opulent in such a state of things be turned into mourning, with justice will their songs be turned into *lamentations*.

It is in the nature of things, that those who are engaged in bodily labour should be the least capable of defending themselves against the effects of *oppression*, and especially when it approaches them in the frauds of *measures* and *prices*. Therefore it is in the duty of the Elders, the Magistrates, the Law-givers, under whatever name they may go, to take care that those who labour be not thus defrauded, oppressed and enslaved; to take care that the *Ephah* be not made smaller and the *Shekel* larger: to take care that the measure be not diminished and the price augmented: to take care that

the labourer be not, whether by force or by fraud, deprived of his fair and just wages. It is the *first* duty of all rulers to watch over the happiness of *the people at large*, civil society having been formed for the good of the whole of the people, and not for the profit, or honours of a few. And, can rulers, then, do their duty, and justify themselves at the tribunal of a God of justice, if they uphold, or suffer to exist, a state of things, which robs the labourer of his wages, grinds him down to the feet of the rich, renders him poor, and then makes him a slave? "Accursed," surely are those, who cheat the poor by the means of fraudulent weights and measures, whether of goods or of money; but not less accursed are those, who are the *abettors* or *screeners* of such as commit these sins, in defiance of the dictates of conscience and of the laws of God.

The BIBLE is strenuously recommended to our perusal, it is highly extolled, it is widely distributed. But, to what purpose, unless we attend to its contents, and *act* up to its precepts? And, amongst all the numerous precepts that it contains are there any enjoined with so much force, and so frequently repeated, as those of *acting justly towards the labourer*, and mildly and tenderly towards the destitute and unfortunate?

We have seen that the opulent have no right to withhold aid from the distressed, even where the distress has arisen from actual misconduct. What, then, must be the magnitude of the guilt of those, who first cause the distress, and then deny relief to the distressed person? Poverty, in some degree, is the lot of mankind; but if we take a survey of the state of nations, we shall find, that a very small portion of it really arises from any fault in the poor themselves; and that its principal cause is

some vicious institution, some course of mis-rule, which enables the rich to rob, degrade and oppress the labouring classes. "Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant, whether he be of thy brethren, or of the strangers that are within thy gates. At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shalt the sun go down upon it, for he is poor and setteth his heart upon it." Deuteronomy, chap. xxiv. ver. 14 and 15. Here is the foundation of all the precepts connected with the subject before us. We are not to *oppress* those that labour for us; and the sort of oppression here contemplated, is not blows; not tyrannical treatment; not open and violent robbery; but merely a *withholding of hire*; a withholding of the whole or a part of that which is due to the hired servant; of that which forms a just compensation for his labour. We are to give him this just compensation, and we are to do it without delay too; for the sun is not to go down upon it.

Therefore, all the contrivances which men may make use of for the purpose of withholding due hire from the labourer are strictly forbidden by him whose word we say we have before us when we open the Bible. There is precept upon precept for relieving and comforting the distressed, for lifting up those that are cast down; but here is the beginning of this series of precepts: that is, we are by no means to withhold the hire of the labourer. And, indeed, to what a depth must we have sunk in injustice as well as meanness, before we can bring ourselves to add to our wealth by drawing from such a source! To practice fraud on those who are as rich as ourselves; to misuse the understanding and ingenuity which God has given us, so far as to employ them for the purpose of over-reaching in our dealings with those who are upon an equal-

ity with ourselves in point of wealth : to do this is to be both dishonest and base. Where, then, are we to find words to give an adequate description of the baseness of those who employ their understanding and ingenuity for the purpose of adding to their heaps by fraud committed on the uninformed, and perhaps unfortunate creature, who is exhausting his strength, and perhaps shortening his life, in the doing of that, which, without any fraud committed upon him, is yielding us the means of earthly gratifications of every kind? Here is dishonesty; here is cruelty; here is the blackest ingratitude all united in the same act. If the man who has merely over-reached his opulent neighbour, dares not, on retiring to his pillow, recal the act to his mind, with what feelings must he place his head upon that pillow, who, after seeing the labourer toil through the week with sustenance hardly sufficient to support life, has, on the Saturday night, cheated him of part of the means of carrying home bread and raiment to his children? If such a man can reflect on his conduct without remorse, he must be lost to all sense of honour as well as of honesty : it may fairly be presumed that nothing in this world can reclaim him, and that, in the next, every curse awaits him that God has declared shall be the reward of the oppressor. If even the Ox is not to be muzzled when he treadeth out the corn. If even this is a transgression; what must be the amount of the sin of withholding food from our poorer brother who is labouring for our profit? To commit such acts under any circumstances is sufficiently detestable; but, to commit them, while we affect zeal for religion, and expend money in the distribution of the Bible, is to add to all the rest of the sin, that hypocrisy which is to be blasted and

withered like the "rush cut down in his greenness."

But, it is not only bare *justice* which God requires at our hands towards our poorer brethren. He requires a great deal more. He is not content with bare justice in the legal sense of the contract; nor even with justice according to the spirit of the contract. His precepts go to the extent of our *sharing* the good things, which he has bestowed upon us, with our poorer brother; "so that none suffer and all may be filled." And this he grounds upon the principle, that he himself is the Father of all, and that all the blessings that are enjoyed have been bestowed by him. Nothing can be more reasonable than this, besides its being a positive command. For, previous to the formation of civil society, all men had an equal right to the earth, and to all its produce. In entering into society, therefore, men must have understood, and, as far as God himself condescended to give laws to a particular people, this natural presumption is confirmed, that no human being in the community was to be without the means of effectual relief in case of want.

Very minute are the precepts of the Bible in this respect. The Israelite Nation had been brought out of bondage; and God continually reminds them of that. He continually reminds the rich, that their fathers were all slaves; all poor; that they owed all to him; and that as he had freed and enriched them, so they should not enslave, but should be kind and generous to *their poorer brethren*, and even to the stranger. He warns the rich, not only not to oppress, but not to take *advantage* of the poor, in any manner or shape. He enjoins them to lend to the poor, and forbids them to take interest. "If there be among you," says he,

"one of thy brethren within any of thy gates, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt open thy hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need." Deuteronomy, chap. xv. ver. 7 and 8. The text goes on to enjoin on the rich not to do this grudgingly; not to feel angry with the poor man; not to regard this lending as any thing but a duty; and even enjoins that, when the term of a bond servant is expired, he shall not only be suffered to go free, but shall not be sent away empty, but furnished liberally "out of thy flock, out of thy floor, and out of thy wine press;" and then follows the principle upon which the precept is founded: "thou shalt furnish him liberally of that wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee; and thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee; and therefore, I command thee this thing to-day." All this is to be done, too, with *good-will*, and not grudgingly. "It shall not seem hard unto thee, when thou sendest him away free from thee; for he hath been worth a double hired servant to thee in serving thee six years: and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all that thou doest."

Here is the precept; here is the principle on which it is founded; here is the reward in case of obedience; and, in case of disobedience the vengeance of God is by no means less unequivocally stated. Here we have a description of the manner in which servants; that is to say, those who *labour* in any manner or way, ought to be treated by their employers. It becomes employers, therefore, and especially if they pretend to consider the Bible as the word of God, to ask themselves whether they treat according to this rule, those who labour for

them. They should bear in mind that the praising of the Bible; that vehement reproach against those who are bold enough to deny its divine origin; that even the expending of money in order to cause the Bible to be distributed; that all these are not sufficient; and, indeed, that they weigh not as a feather, without obeying the precepts which the Bible contains. Such persons should consider that, without an obedience of the precepts, all their zeal with regard to the propagation of those precepts, is not only unavailing, but is a proof of the profoundest hypocrisy, and forms of itself more than sufficient ground to justify the punishment which they may have to endure.

It behoves such persons to reflect seriously; to examine very scrupulously into their own conduct, and to compare it with the rule laid down for their guidance. It is very easy to read the Bible; to sit and hear it read; to condemn those who are inclined to do neither. Salvation would be a cheap thing indeed if it were to be obtained at such a price. But every man who pretends to believe in the Bible; to regard it as the word of God, and who, at the same time, sets its precepts at nought by his actions; shews that he regards them as something to be made use of to keep others in check, and to be no check or restraint upon himself; is really and truly a scorner; and however he may settle his account with God, richly merits the detestation of man. Besides the duties, which those who are blessed with wealth have to perform in the character of employers, there are others which they have to perform in the character of possessors of property. God has made ample provision for the poor, the fatherless and the widows. In the first place he allots to them the gleanings of

the fields and the vineyards. In the next place he gives them a share, and a large share, of the tythe of all the produce of the land. The Levite; that is to say the Priest, he also gives a share; but he gives a larger share to the stranger, the widow and the fatherless. If the Priest, therefore, refer us to the Bible for proof of his claim to a share of the produce of the earth, shall not the poor also refer to the same Bible for proof of the justice of *their* claim? "At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tythe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates, and the Levite (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee) and the stranger, and the fatherless and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come and shall eat and be satisfied; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thy hand which thou doest." Deuteronomy, chap. xiv. ver. 28 and 29.

Now, will any man say that this is not the *word of God*? Let him, then, fling the Bible into the fire. But will he say; will he have the audacity to say, that it is the word of God, and that it is of authority as far as relates to the Priest; and of no authority as far as relates to the poor? If such a man there be, it is he that is the blasphemer: it is he that "perverteth the judgment of the stranger:" it is he that "turneth aside the poor in the gate from his right;" it is he against whom God has declared that he will execute vengeance; that he will cause to mourn instead of rejoice, and whose songs he will cause to be turned into lamentations.

There is no festival; there is no occasion of rejoicing; there is no season or time devoted to adoration, but the poor is to derive some benefit therefrom. The possessor and his family are to feast;

they are to rejoice; all the signs of gladness are to be seen and heard; plenty is to abound; but in that plenty, the man servant, the maid servant, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow are always to participate; and the Priest is only to make one amongst the guests.

If these parts of the Bible be to be disregarded; if they be to have no weight with us, what reason is there for our paying attention to other parts of the Bible; such, for instance, as treats of the fidelity due from servants to their masters. God has said, Thou shalt not steal; but he has said, and not less positively, "Thou shalt lend without interest, and the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow shall freely, and without payment, partake in the produce of the fields; thou shalt furnish liberally out of thy flock, and thy floor, and thy winepress to the servant who has served thee faithfully; and thou shalt do this, too, at the time when he is quitting thy service." Can these precepts be justly disregarded, and can we at the same time justly demand punishment on the head of the thief? If the one can be disregarded, what authority have we for insisting upon a strict observance of the other? While we remember all the precepts which enjoin *duties* on the poor, how are we to deny the validity of the precepts which constitute their *rights*?

It is of importance in a case like this, to inquire what oppression means; for to oppress is a word not generally used in its right sense. To oppress the poor is not only forbidden over and over again in every book of the Bible, but it is seldom mentioned without being marked out for signal vengeance. Oppression may consist in the refusal or withholding of right as well as in the doing of wrong. It may consist in the using of lenity,

where it is used partially. It may consist, and this is most frequently its character, in the enforcing of laws in a partial manner, so as to make them weigh heavily on some and to pass lightly over others. If the law say, Punish the thief; pay the labourer honestly; give to the poor, without payment, a share of the produce of the fields; and if you punish the thief, without paying the labourer honestly, and without giving the poor a share of the produce of the fields, you are guilty of *oppression*: you are worse than a contemner of the law of God; for you not only set that law at naught, but you pervert it so as to make it a pretext for your injustice and cruelty. You must take the whole together, or leave the whole. You are not to pretend that you are an observer of the laws of religion; and at the same time neglect that part of them which imposes a duty on yourself. Power, mere brute force, may enable you to act, at one and the same time, the hypocrite and the tyrant; but, of this you may be assured at any rate, that, while you thus basely dare the vengeance of God, you will never persuade the oppressed that there is any thing contained in God's word to prevent them, when they may chance to have the power, to do unto you, as you have done unto them.

It is, therefore, the interest of the rich to act justly, mildly and tenderly towards the poor. Mere self-interest, without any other motive; without any regard had to sentiments of honour and to precepts of religion, teach the rich their duties towards their poorer brethren. All the good things of the world come from the Creator. They are held in trust for the whole family of mankind. If a son having many brethren, were to possess an estate from his father; were to take the whole for his own spending, and were to leave his

brethren to toil, to beg, or to starve, he would become, and justly become, a reproach amongst his neighbours. And what are the possessors of large property but the more fortunate brethren of a numerous family? Would not the man be truly detestable who could enjoy life, who could live in pleasure, who could think his state *honourable* while his unfortunate sisters and brothers were in rags; and yet, is such a man more detestable than he who can be well satisfied; who can enjoy the effects of riches; who can think his condition *honourable*, while he is unable to stir a furlong from his door without seeing many of his poorer neighbours perishing for want? The mind of such a man must be shockingly perverted; or else he would perceive that he participated in the disgrace belonging to a state of things in which such misery could exist.

Kings are called, sometimes the *fathers* of their people; and certainly, when the people are governed in a way to make them resemble a good and happy family, the office is worthy the appellation. But when one part of the people are aggrandised by means which plunge the other part into poverty and misery, the appellation becomes inappropriate, not to say contemptible and ridiculous. The duty of individuals, however, is plain and straight-forward. Riches ought to puff no man up. They are in themselves no proof of the excellence of the possessor. They form no fair title to pre-eminence; and where they obtain pre-eminence, virtue and wisdom must necessarily be on the decay; because a love of gain will be the prevailing passion.

The great corrective of the insolence of riches is to be found in tracing them back to their source; that is to say, *to the labour of the poor*. This is the

source of all riches; for, if the labourer received, at all times, the full value of his labour, no profit could arise from it to any other person. All the profit would remain with himself, and no one would be puffed up into riches. It is not contended that this ought to be; because the order of the world requires that there should be motives to exertion; and these motives are the hope of riches and the fear of poverty. But, a state of things may arise when men are not content with moderate riches; and this may lead to oppressions which may in time destroy the fear of poverty; which may in short make the labourer worse than a bondman; make him a slave; make him the property of his employer; hang the lash over his back and deprive him of all fear but of that. Unhappy, indeed, is a people reduced to a state like this. The name of *poor* is in such a case hardly applicable; and, indeed, the word *poor* does not belong, in reason, to the labourer. The state of the labourer is merely one of the links in the chain of society; it is one of the ranks of society; and, rightly viewed, it is by no means the lowest. All property has its origin in labour. Labour itself is property; the root of all other property; and unhappy is that community, where labourer and poor man are synonymous terms. No man is *essentially* poor: poor and rich are relative terms; and if the labourer have his due, and be in good health, in the vigour of life, and willing to labour, to make him a poor man, there must be some defect in the government of the community in which he lives. Because the produce of his labour would of itself produce a sufficiency of every thing needful for himself and family. The labouring classes must always form nine tenths of a people; and, what a shame it must be, what an im-

putation on the rulers, if nine tenths of the people be worthy of the name of poor! It is impossible that such a thing can be, unless there be an unfair and unjust distribution of the profits of labour. Labour produces every thing that is good upon the earth; it is the cause of every thing that men enjoy of worldly possessions; when, therefore, the strong and the young engage in labour and cannot obtain from it a sufficiency to keep them out of the ranks of the poor, there must be something greatly amiss in the management of the community; something that gives to the few an unjust and cruel advantage over the many; and surely, unless we assume the character of beasts of prey, casting aside all feelings of humanity, all love of country, and all regard for the ordinances of God, we must sincerely regret, and anxiously endeavour to remove such an evil whenever we may find it to exist. The prophet, in the words of my text, speaks of some of the causes of such an unnatural state of things. False measures, false balances, addition to the price of food; the lessened Ephah and the augmented Shekel: these are amongst the means by which the labourer is oppressed; by which he is crushed down into poverty and slavery. And, upon the supposition that men are not to be deterred from wicked acts by the threatened vengeance of God, are considerations connected with a love of country to have no weight? Is all that we have heard at different periods of our lives; and all that we have said about love of country; about the honour of our country; the greatness of our country: does all this mean nothing at last? And what does country mean, disconnected with the people that inhabit the country? And how can the people of the country be said to be in an honour-

able state ; to be renowned, to be glorious, if nine tenths of them be worthy of the name of *poor* ? The man who can talk about the honour of his country, at a time when its millions are in a state little short of famine ; and when that is, too, apparently their permanent state, must be an oppressor in his heart : must be destitute of all the feelings, shame and remorse : must be fashioned for a despot, and can only want the power to act the character in its most tragical scenes.

A disposition to relieve the distressed and miserable, when they actually come to that state, is wanting in but few persons. Spectacles of woe seldom fail to produce some impression on even the most obdurate heart. There are, indeed, some who are capable of seeing the victim of oppression actually expire before their eyes, while they themselves are decked in silken robes and loll on couches of down, the fruit of the oppression. There are some, who are capable of going still further, of not only viewing with dry eyes and without a helping hand, the victim of oppression in his last agonies ; but of turning those agonies into jest. These, however, are not men, they are monsters ; and are not to be brought into our view in speaking of the duties of men towards their poorer brethren. There are few persons insensible to feelings of humanity and compassion when they behold the victim in the last stages of misery. There are also few, who, in such a case, will withhold a helping hand ; will not endeavour, and from right feelings at the moment, too, to afford relief.

But, the thing to be desired is, the duty for us to bear in mind is, the *prevention of the existence of the misery*. There is merit, certainly, in relieving distress ; and the merit is in itself so clear and so

amiable, that we ought never too scrupulously to inquire into the motive: but far greater is the merit; much more disinterested, because, not at all likely to be repaid by either praise or gratitude; much greater is the merit in endeavouring, though without success, to prevent the misery that calls for relief. To bestow alms, to clothe the naked, to feed the hungry, to shelter the houseless, to snatch the expiring victim from the jaws of death; these always merit, and the world is always so just as to give them, unequivocal praise. But far greater is the praise due to those who endeavour to provide, or to cause to be provided, the means of preventing nakedness, hunger and destitution of shelter. This, therefore, is the duty to be inculcated; this is the thing which ought to stand foremost in our view, and of which we ought never to lose sight during the course of our lives. This is true charity; this is what our country and what the laws of God call for at our hands.

Few men are so situated as to be able to extend their exertions in this way beyond the circle of their own private connections and dependants; but every man, who is not actually a labourer himself, has some one whom he has to employ to labour for him; and, therefore, if every such man were to take and lay before him the great precept of the gospel, and were thereupon to do as he would be done unto, there would be very little of that poverty and misery, which are now to be seen in almost every country, and at almost every step. To steal, to defraud, to purloin in any manner of way, to appropriate to one's own use the goods of another; these are all crimes, well known to the laws of God and man. And, is it not to steal; is it not to commit fraud; is it not to purloin; is it

not, in short, to rob, if you take from the labourer more than the fair worth of the wages you pay him? Even to overreach, to outwit your equals in point of wealth, though in transactions illegal in themselves, are deemed worthy of expulsion from society; and yet to defraud the labourer, to defraud him who is the maker of your riches, who gives you ease and abundance, the profit of whose labour (and that alone) places you above him in the estimation of the world: to defraud him, cheat him by the means of false measures and deceitful calculations, is thought nothing of, or if thought of, only as a matter of exultation, the criterion of cleverness being the greatest quantity of labour obtained in exchange for the smallest quantity of food!

In order to disguise from ourselves our own meanness, ingratitude and cruelty, we put the thing on a different footing: we consider labour as an article of *merchandise*, and then proceed upon the maxim, that we have a right to purchase as cheap as we can. This maxim, even supposing the idea of merchandise to be correct, is not so sound as habit, and very vicious habit, makes us regard it to be. We are not justified, upon any principle of morality, to give less for any thing than we ourselves believe the thing to be worth, because this is not doing as we would be done unto. The comparison, therefore, is of little avail; and besides, a worse example than that of the merchant could not easily be referred to. "He is a *Merchant*," says the prophet HOSEA, "the balances of deceit are in his hand; he loveth to oppress." No wonder that those who wish to enrich themselves by the means of unjust profits drawn from labour should put themselves upon the footing of the merchant! But labour is not merchandise, except, indeed, it be the labour of

a slave. It is altogether personal. It is inseparable from the body of the labourer; and cannot be considered as an article to be cheapened, without any regard being had to the well-being of the person who has to perform it. The labourer, if you persist in treating his labour as a commodity for which you have a right to give the smallest quantity of food in return, has his rights too; his rights of nature; his right to a sufficiency of food and of raiment; or else his right to employ his strength and ingenuity to obtain them without reference to the laws passed for the appropriation of the property created by labour.

It is, however, nothing more than shuffling and equivocating with our consciences to attempt to justify by such arguments the withholding from the labourer his fair share of the profits of his labour. The man who wholly disregards every moral and religious consideration; who tells you at once that he regards the labourers as cattle, and that he has a right to treat them in that way which shall be most conducive to his own advantage, is consistent enough: he is a brute in human shape; like a brute he acts, with the additional malignity of human refinement. But what are we to say of the pretended friend of religion; of the circulator of the Bible; of the propagator of the gospel, who, with brotherly love on his lips, sweats down to a skeleton, and sends nightly home to his starving children, the labourer out of whose bones he extracts even the means of his ostentatious display of piety? What are we to say of the bitter persecutor of "infidels," who, while he says grace over his sumptuous meals, can hear, without the smallest emotion, the hectic coughs of the squalid crowds whose half-famished bodies pine away in the pes-

tiferous air of that prison which he calls a factory?

Can such things be; and can such men know peace of mind? Can avarice and habit have so far obliterated reason, deadened the feelings of humanity, quieted the cries of conscience as to afford tranquillity to such men, on the miserable plea that their conduct squares with the maxims of commerce? So did the conduct of Judas Iscariot; for, to rob men of their blood differs only in degree from robbing them of their sweat; and, in some respects, the former is less cruel than the latter. Deliberately to take away man's life; coolly to betray him and sell his blood; - patiently to lie in wait for the blood of our neighbour; seems to admit of no comparison in point of atrocity. But, does even the murderer's spy much exceed in iniquity the wretch who adopts and steadily pursues a system of fraud on those by whose labour he is enriched? To profit by deceits practised on the community at large; to cheat our neighbours and countrymen by means of short measures, false balances and extortions; this bespeaks a heart odiously wicked; this bespeaks greediness, dishonesty and cruelty; what, then, must the man be, who can deliberately and systematically act in the same way towards those, who, in his field, or under his very roof, exert their strength and exhaust their ingenuity for his benefit; and who are content if they obtain a mere sufficiency of food and of raiment out of the fruits of that labour, which gives him all the means of indulging in luxurious enjoyments? What must the man be, who can see his table spread with dainties, with all that nature aided by art can set before him to pamper his appetite; who knows that he owes no part of this to his own labour; and yet, who can,

while he affects to thank God for the blessing, studiously defraud and degrade those whose labour has created all that he possesses, all that fills his heart with pride?

Oppressors, and especially oppressors of this description, seldom fail to be hypocrites, hypocrisy being necessary to screen them from public odium. In the ranks of feigned and ostentatious humanity such men generally stand amongst the foremost. But, will this avail them ought? Will this take them out of the purview of the prophet's denunciation? God has not said, nor has he left room for the oppressor to hope, that he who has delighted in, that he who has fattened on, "*the gain of oppressions,*" is to purchase forgiveness by flinging his orts to the almost expiring oppressed, or by hiding their naked and shivering limbs with the cast-off coverings of his horse! God has commanded, that those who labour shall have their full share of the fruits of their labour; that they shall be liberally furnished out of the flock, the floor and the wine-press. He has most pointedly commanded, that this shall be a matter of *right*, and not of *favour*; and he has strictly forbidden the giver to make any *humiliation* of the receiver a condition of, or a circumstance belonging to, the gift. *Obedience* and *fidelity* in servants God strictly enjoins, but the compensation for these is not to consist of garbage, rags and beds of straw: out of that which arises from his labour the servant is to share, not only in all things needful unto him, but in all the pleasures springing from the same source. And, again, what must that man be, who can *enjoy* festivity, arising out of the fruit of his servant's labour, while he knows that the limbs which have created the feast are perishing with cold: while

he knows the feast to be the fruit of unrequited toil, and that that which fills his body and makes his heart glad, is, if traced home, the flesh, blood, and bones of the labourer? To attempt persuasion, to reason, to expostulate, with such a man is vain. Give him the thing in kind; cut up the carcase, and serve it him in a charger: he remains unmoved. Nothing short of the vengeance of God can touch his heart of flint; he has lowered the measure and heightened the price; he has made the Ephah small and the Shekel great; he has falsified the balance by deceit; he has robbed the hired servant of his hire; he has bought the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes; he has fattened on the gain of oppressions; he has "eaten the flesh and drunk the blood of his poorer brother;" "his feasting shall be turned into mourning, saith the Lord God, and his songs into lamentations."

# GOD'S JUDGMENT

## ON UNJUST JUDGES.

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"Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow. And all the people shall say Amen." Deut. ch. xxvii. ver. 19.

"That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward; and the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up." Micah ch. vii. ver. 3.

"Therefore have I made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law." Malachi ch. ii. ver. 9

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To judge, when we are speaking of our conduct towards our neighbour, means, not only the exercise of the faculties of discernment and discrimination; not only the forming of an opinion, but also the giving of that opinion: and, in speaking of judicial matters, it, of course, includes, the acquittal, or condemnation, of any one whose conduct has been submitted to our examination and decision.

From this definition we, at once, perceive, that there are two distinct kinds of *judging*, and that, in judging, we may, on different occasions, act in two characters, very different from each other in point of importance. In the one character, we are merely the voluntary givers of *opinion* on the conduct of our neighbour, without having the power to add direct consequences to that opinion; but, in the other character, we are clothed with power to acquit or to condemn, to add, immediately, consequences deeply affecting our neighbour.

Even in the former of these characters we ought to take our steps with great circumspection. An unjust opinion of our neighbour, when we give it utterance, becomes *slander*; and, in the catalogue of sins, slander is by no means the lowest. "Who-so privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off." Psalm ci. ver. 5. We are warned in Matthew, ch. vii. ver. 1. not to *judge*, lest we be judged; and, in numerous other parts of the Scriptures we are most solemnly cautioned against unjust opinions of, and censures on, our neighbour. Christ tells us "not to judge according to *appearances*; but judge righteous judgment." John, ch. vii. ver. 24. That is to say, to consider well and patiently the motives, or the temptations, that may have led to our neighbour's conduct, before we condemn that conduct even in our own minds, and more especially before we give utterance to our censures on it, and thereby expose our neighbour to calamities that may arise out of our censure.

Cases, do indeed, frequently arise, when the evil of withholding our censures would be far greater than that of pronouncing them. In such cases *duty* calls on us for promulgation. But, when this latter proceeds from a desire to place ourselves in advantageous contrast with our neighbour, or to gratify the selfish feelings of others to whom we may wish to make our court, or, from the still more odious but too frequent motive of finding an excuse for fickleness in friendship, breach of fidelity, or want of active compassion; then the promulgation of censure, even though that censure be founded on truth, is, in itself, an act of injustice, and generally a much greater sin than that to which the censure is applied.

If, then, we are to be thus scrupulous, and are to

guard ourselves with such great care against acting upon conclusions, drawn even from facts which admit of little or no doubt, and in cases where our decision has only a probable and remote effect on the well-being of our neighbour, what ought to be our anxiety in cases where our decision is attended with certain and immediate consequences affecting his life, liberty or property, and where by our erroneous, intemperate, corrupt, or partial judgment, he may be bereft of happiness, and plunged into misery all the days of his life !

It is of judging when clothed with such fearful power that I am now to speak ; and, first, let us inquire into the *origin* of this power. " *Who art thou,*" says the apostle JAMES, " *that judgest another ?*" And, where is the *right* that man has to take away the goods, or enchain the body, or shed the blood of man ? What is it that makes the putting of man to death, in certain cases, by the hands of man, *not murder ?*

The foundation of this right, and of the power that proceeds from it, is, the necessity of such power to the existence of civil society. There must be a common arbiter between man and man, to which arbiter all men must submit. Laws there must be to punish offences ; or there can be no secure possession of goods, no peace, no safety of person. Hence arises the right of man to judge man ; a right that God has not given to any particular class of persons. He has given it solely for the good of the whole community wherein it is exercised ; and not for the benefit of any particular part of that community.

When man sits in judgment on man, he exercises the highest of the functions that man can exercise. The judged party has been deprived of all

his own power of acting in the case. He has been compelled to come and submit his property, liberty, or life, to the judgment of another, or others. He is thus compelled to submit for the good of the whole community. He has had taken from him all power of resistance to the judgment, be that judgment what it may. He is man subjected to the absolute power of man. But upon this express condition, laid down with such precision and such emphasis in the laws of God, *that the judgment shall be just*; that is to say, that it shall rest upon true grounds, that it shall be mixed up with no corrupt motive, and, above all things, that there shall, neither in the judgment itself, nor in the degree of punishment, be any respect of persons, any favour or partiality.

*Judges*, under which appellation are included all persons by whatever name known, that have any thing to do in accusing, in pronouncing, or in condemning, in judicial cases; judges are fully and most awfully warned of the consequences of misconduct, whether arising from negligence or corruption. Judges are to make "*diligent inquiry*;" Deut. ch. xix. ver. 18. and, in 2 Chron. ch. xix. ver. 6. Jehoshaphat "said to the Judges, Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is *with you* in the judgment. Wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed and do it: for, there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, no respect of persons, nor taking of gifts." It were to be desired, that all those, who are clothed with judicial power, would bear these injunctions in mind; and also bear in mind the judgment that await themselves, in case they prostitute their power to do injustice.

The great and most prevalent motive to the doing

of injustice is the hope of *gain* in return for the atrocious act. The law-giver of the Israelites takes care to warn judges against this temptation, and he, in the words of my text, pronounces a curse upon them, if they do injustice to the poor and defenceless. It is, indeed, "doing evil with both hands earnestly," when "the judge asketh for a reward; when the *great man uttereth his mischievous desires*;" and when "*so they wrap it up*." When Judges, or any persons concerned in the giving of judgment, act thus, surely they merit even that *curse*, which God has pronounced upon them.

Holy Writ is full of injunctions, warnings, and denunciations as to this crying sin; this cold-blooded offence against man, against the laws of God, against all the feelings of human nature. "A wicked man taketh a *gift* out of his bosom to pervert the ways of judgment." Prov. chap. xvii. ver. 23. Again in Isaiah, chap. i. ver. 23. "Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one *loveth gifts*, and followeth after *rewards*: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them."

But, let not men deceive themselves. By the words *bribe*, *gift*, *reward*, many things besides *money*, or *goods in hand*, may be meant. A bribe, a gift, or a reward may come in various shapes. It may assume a thousand forms: it may be present, but it may also be distant: it may be certain, but it may also be contingent: and, perhaps, direct bribes, given into the hand at once, are the least dangerous of all. For, the conscience of a man might startle at a direct bribe; a plain bargain for injustice; a barefaced receipt of the price of his perjury and cruelty. Many a man will take that indirectly, which he will not hold out his hand to receive.

He must be an abandoned wretch indeed, who will hold out his polluted hand, saying, "Give me the price of this man's blood."

Yet, does he, in effect, do less, who finds guilt in his neighbour without cause, clearly established; who inquires not diligently; who determines from the *hope of any benefit*, certain or contingent, present or distant; or who judges his neighbour from the fear of loss to himself from whatever cause the fear may be apprehended? It is a very lively picture of the workings of corruption, in matters of judicial judgment, that is given by the prophet MICAH, in the words of my text. "The *great man* uttereth his mischievous desire: so they *wrap it up*." That is to say; so they *disguise it*: so they carry on their frauds and abominations: so they do injustice in the name of justice: so they rob, so they mutilate, so they load with chains, so they murder; and all under the name and with the due forms of *law* and of *justice*.

This *wrapping up*, as the prophet aptly calls it, is the great secret of judicial iniquity. If transacted openly, the works of injustice are so odious in their very nature, that they must soon bring the monsters guilty of them to an end, in one way or another. But, being disguised, they go on for a long time, and, in general, end not but with some convulsion that dissolves the community itself. By degrees they become visible in spite of all wrapping up. Victim after victim amongst the strangers and friendless; escape after escape amongst the great and rich; these make men reason, whether they will or not; reasoning produces a conclusion in every just mind, that a tyranny exists; and, from that moment the fall of the tyrants is decreed as completely as if by the voice of a prophet. "Woe,"

says Isaiah, ch. x. ver. 1, 2. "Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; to turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless."

And how is this "*woe*" to show itself! In desolation, in degradation, in the most dreaded of punishments. The judgment pronounced on Jehoiakim by Jeremiah, ch. xxii. ver. 15, is a general sentence on unjust judges: "Shalt thou reign, because thou closest thyself in cedar? Did not thy father do judgment and justice, and then it was well with him? He judged the cause of the poor and needy: was not *this* to know me? saith the Lord. But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and, for oppression, and for violence, to do it." And what is the sentence on this unjust prince and judge? "He shall be buried with the *burial of an ass*, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem."

Is God unjust? Is this doom too severe? Is this too much as a punishment for the cruelty and baseness of judicial injustice? In the first place, before a man who is vested with the power of judging can even *think* of acting unjustly, he must have made up, coolly made up his mind to falsify his solemn promise, made before man and with God called to witness. Cruel he must be; for well he knows the sufferings that his injustice will occasion. And how *base* must that man be, who can see the unoffending victim before him, and coolly doom him to destruction! Thou callest thyself *a man*, doest thou, wretch! And, perchance, talkest of thy home, thy kindred, thy wife and children! And, the poor victim,

then? Has *he* not home and kindred and wife and children? And will you, for your own base purposes; to gratify your own greediness or vanity, or to hush your own coward fears, consign him to chains, or deliver him over to the axe? "Cursed" be thou then, "and let all the people say, *Amen*."

The perpetrators of injustice are not to imagine themselves free from guilt, because they do not *all at once* pounce upon their prey and tear it to pieces. Proceeding with muffled paw, they destroy the victim by degrees; but, it is *destruction*, nevertheless, that they occasion in the end. Like vultures, they merely, at first, wound the hapless creature, and then lay him by till their appetite demand him. The prophet ZEPHANIAH seems to have judges of this description in his eye, when he says: "Her judges are *evening* wolves; they know not the bones *till the morrow*;" a figure of speech most aptly applied to those, who, under the sacred names of law and justice, first by slow degrees, deprive the victim of all means of defence, rob him even of the compassion of mankind; and then sacrifice him to their own selfish purposes. They are *slow* in their approaches: they appear smooth and soft: they know not the bones "till the morrow;" but then they crush them between their teeth, and they revel in the indulgence of all their natural ferocity.

*Cowardice* is a quality universally despised, but not universally well defined. It is generally spoken of as synonymous with timidity, or *bodily fear*; that is to say, a great reluctance to expose the body to the risk of being hurt. If the word were confined to this meaning, the quality is unjustly held in contempt; for, no man can help being timid, and a very great portion of women really are timid in this sense of the word. But, when one man sees

his neighbour wholly at his mercy; when he sees even his enemy brought bound and laid prostrate before him; and can, then, take advantage of him to avenge himself (under the mask of *doing justice*) for some alarm which that neighbour has excited in his bosom; then, indeed, we see *cowardice* in its real and odious character. All the persecution of the apostles; the imprisonment of St. PAUL; the stoning of St. STEPHEN to death; the crucifixion of CHRIST himself; and all the perfidy, bribery and false-swearing, put in practice to effect these purposes, had their foundation in this species of *cowardice*; the vengeance of corrupt men alarmed for the profits of their corruption, than which a motive more base never, surely, inhabited the human breast.

Nor let the *aiders* and *abettors* in deeds like these hope to escape the judgment due to unjust judges. It is a miserable excuse to say, that *you* did not wish the blood to be shed, or the body to be loaded with chains. Pontius Pilate and Felix could, and did, say as much. The unjust judge seldom uses the axe himself. Darius did not cast Daniel into the lion's den with his own hands. He only *consented* to have it done. They who actually threw him into the den, did not devour him with their own jaws. But, did not Darius and his advisers do all they could to cause him to be devoured? Were they not guilty of murder as completely as if he had been devoured? And, is not, then, every aider and abettor in an unjust judgment as guilty as the judge himself? Such abettors may flatter themselves that the blood will lie upon other heads; but, they are perverters of judgment, and the curse of God has been pronounced upon them. No excuse will be found in

having yielded to injustice to avoid displeasing other men; for, this is only one particular species of corruption. It is bottomed in a desire to avoid loss or injury; and that is only another expression for *gain*: it is, in one and the same act, cowardice and corruption.

Hateful as unjust judgments are in all cases, they are never quite so hateful as when the perpetrators affect to be *religious*, and to appeal to God to witness their integrity. And, if we carefully examine Holy Writ, we shall find the cruelest of injustice and an affectation of the most profound respect for religion inseparable companions. This is well illustrated in the prophet Micah, ch. iii. ver. 11. "The heads thereof judge *for reward*, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof *divine for money*: yet will they *lean upon the Lord*, and say, Is not the Lord *among us*? None evil can come upon us." And what says the Lord, whose name they thus abused? "Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps." God tells the Israelites by the mouth of the prophet Amos, not to insult him with their religious ceremonies, but to practise *justice and judgment*. "I *hate*, I *despise* your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though you offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let *judgment run down as waters*, and righteousness as a mighty stream." Amos, ch. v. ver. 21.

What a rebuke! And does not this rebuke address itself to every man, who, while he is making an outward profession and show of religion, is

practising injustice and seeking innocent blood; who, while he is sprinkling the altar of God with tears of affected piety, is making human sacrifices to his own greediness, vanity and malice; or to the fear of giving offence to the "great man who uttereth his mischievous desire?" This rebuke ought to sink deep into the mind of those, who hope to balance their account by setting their outward show of piety towards God against their injustice towards man. If they deem their encouragement of the distribution of the Bible a good work, let them, then, observe the precepts of the Bible. If they cite the Bible to prove, that to do justice on offenders is right, let them not forget the curse pronounced on those who shall, under the mask of justice, be guilty of oppression. Hypocrisy, always odious, is never quite so odious as when employed as a mask for judicial injustice: it is the garb of piety assumed for the purpose of committing cruelty; the garb of religion put on in order to sanctify a violation of all the laws of God and man. Against the petulant, the intemperate, the violent, the openly profligate perverter of judgment, the oppressed usually find some remedy, some means of arresting the progress of his iniquity: but, against the perversion of judgment by the cool, placid, deep-designing religious hypocrite, there is no redress other than that afforded by the interposition of the Almighty.

Yet, does injustice admit of one other and still higher degree. Judgment may be perverted; the perversion may proceed from corrupt motives; hypocrisy may become the handmaid to corruption; cruelty may be the result: but, still, there wants *partiality* to give the fiend its last tinge of blackness. Here we touch the climax in the attributes of the unjust Judge; and here we have before us an

abuse of power that has never been sanctioned, or winked at, by any ruler without a speedy overthrow of the state itself.

Decrees and ordinances are not *just* because they are *mild*; nor are they *unjust* because they are *severe*. The most mild become hateful by *partial* administration, and the most severe become respected when the administration of them is rigidly *impartial*. When the same measure of punishment is meted to every one, guilty of the same offence, no man has cause to complain: the law is then manifestly made and executed for *the good of the whole community*; and, upon no other right does the infliction of punishment stand. But, when *some* men are severely punished, loaded with many stripes, for offences, which, committed by *others*, bring no punishment at all; then it is equally manifest, that the laws are made solely for the benefit of a few, and that injustice and tyranny prevail. There can be, in such a case, neither lawful ruler, lawful judge, nor commonwealth. The bonds of the social compact are broken.

Accordingly the Judge and Ruler of the world, in giving laws to man, has taken care to warn him against this daring outrage on all the feelings of our nature. Who does not recollect, that the paternal rod has frequently given pain ten times more acute only because it has not fallen with *impartiality*? Who, that has seen even a largess from a father bestowed on a beloved brother, without his own participation, has failed to feel the force of that love of impartiality which is a native of the human breast? What kind and just father ever avoided pain, when compelled to do any thing that savoured of giving one child a preference before another? And if so much solicitude is felt in a case like this,

where the judgment is to be exercised with regard to the wants of the parties, and where the thing to be bestowed belongs in full and exclusive right to the donor, what ought to be the solicitude in a judge, who is no more than a trustee of the community, who has to administer laws made for the general good, and who has none but an usurped and a tyrannical power, other than that which stands on the basis of *justice, due to all men alike?*

To enumerate all the injunctions of God to avoid partiality in judgment, would require a space of no small dimensions. Amongst them we may take a few, though one ought to suffice for the satisfaction of any but determined scorners, or men daringly wicked. "Thou shalt do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour." LEVITICUS, ch. xix. ver. 15. "Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great: ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's." DEUT. ch. i. ver. 17. And again, ch. xvi. ver. 19. "Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift." In PROV. ch. xxiv. ver. 23. "It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment." The apostle JAMES, ch. ii. ver. 4. reprobates *partiality* even in trifling ceremonies; and St. PAUL, to Timothy, ch. v. ver. 21. thus solemnly enjoins him: "I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another, doing *nothing by partiality.*" Last comes the prophet MALACHI within the words of my text: "Therefore, have I made you *contemptible and base* before all

the people, according as you have not kept my ways, but have been *partial in the law.*"

Are these the *words of God*, or are they not? The deist and the atheist will say *No*. And, far better to give the negative in either of those capacities, than pretend to be a believer; than to call these the words of God, and to act in open defiance of the precept which they contain. Not to believe may proceed from defect of understanding; but, to *believe*, and to disobey; to believe in words and to deride in acts; to confess that it is God who speaks, and to set at nought the command conveyed in his words; if this be not impious, where are we to look for proofs of impiety? "The devils believe and *tremble*;" but the believer who is *partial* in judgment, is, in this, so much worse than the devils, that he believes and trembles not.

All injustice is criminal. Even when proceeding from *error* it deserves severe censure, because no judgment should take place without diligent inquiry. When proceeding from corrupt motives it is base; but, when it discovers itself in *partiality*, however craft may contrive to "*wrap it up*," when "the *great man* uttereth his mischievous desire," it becomes doubly detestable; and, especially when distinctions are made between the great and the little, the rich and the poor, in favour of the former and against the latter; wiping a feather over the back of the rich, and sending the lash like knives into the backs of the poor.

When men behold judgments like these, they do not stop to inquire into the *motive*: they know that the motive *must be corrupt*. They are proofs of corruption as conclusive as would be a sight of the bribe actually passing from the hands of the favoured party into that of the Judge. The

consequence is, that there remains no confidence in the rulers : that having become corrupt, to which the community looked for safety against oppression, the Magistrate thenceforth rules by force, and by force alone. His power, instead of being looked up to, as a shield for innocence, is regarded as a screen for guilt. His office is the reverse of what God has said it shall be ; it is a reward to evil doers and a terror to those who do well.

Against seditions, conspiracies, treasons, and rebellions we pray to be protected ; but, what are these when compared with partiality in judgment ! Against that which deprives the sources of power of all confidence ; which subjects every man's goods, liberty and life to chance ; which alienates every heart ; and which kindles throughout the community a mass of unquenchable anger ? This is a sure forerunner of the downfall of states. In such a state of things there can be no legitimate authority ; no lawful sway ; all is injustice and violence.

Partiality in judgment must necessarily lead to the commission of crimes. Those who are sure of impunity have nothing to deter them : and the poor, seeing that the rich commit crimes, will follow their example. The punishment of crime loses its only end, for which it is intended ; namely, to prevent the commission of crime by others ; for, if judgment be partial ; if some escape all punishment, or merely undergo the forms of punishment, for offences which bring heavy punishment on others, punishment is looked upon, and justly looked upon, as an instrument used to keep the poor in subjection to the rich.

There are few so ignorant as not to know, that God has strictly forbidden this partiality in judg-

ment ; hence a persuasion in many, that religion itself is a bugbear, employed by the few to keep the many in awe. For, if the same law, which says, Thou shalt not steal, says also, Thou shalt not respect persons in judgment ; and, if the latter command be violated by the elders of the people and those on the very judgment seat, is it unnatural for the oppressed to conclude, that those elders do not themselves believe in any of the denunciations which the law contains ? What check, then, remains to theft and robbery, other than the force of arms and that vindictive punishment, which are called into action to supply the place of moral honesty and religious awe ?

Miserable is that community, and hastening to swift destruction, where the people yield an unwilling obedience to the ruling powers. There can be neither happiness nor security where obedience proceeds solely from fear ; for, as naturally as the sparks fly upwards, to be feared is to be hated. But, can obedience be willingly yielded, when a people is convinced of the injustice of those who judge them ? When the many see, that the laws are made to be a terror to them and the sport of the wealthy few ? Laws may be very strict, judgments very severe ; but, if an *even-handed* distribution of punishment take place, men will not complain. When they see the high as well as the low subject to the same inquests and the same penalties for the same offence, they must confess that the laws are fair and that the judgments are just. When justice is thus administered, severe punishments operate as a warning not to offend : it is the rod of a father correcting his children. But when the poor are made the 'scape goats for the rich ; when the bodies of the former are lacerated, while those of

the latter go untouched, it is not the rod of a father, but the scourge of a tyrant.

Amongst all the causes of deep-rooted anger, of implacable revenge, not one is so strong as the feeling inspired by partial judgment. To be ourselves lashed with rods of scorpions for that which brings on another scarcely the weight of a finger, is too much for human nature to endure without seeking vengeance. In such an act there is every thing to irritate and inflame. Burning coals applied to the flesh are less tormenting to the body than this outrage is to the mind. It is the last and most poisonous arrow in the quiver of cruel and cowardly oppressors.

"Of *Law*," says Bishop HOOKER, "no less can be acknowledged, than that her seat is the *bosom of God*; her voice the *harmony of the world*. All things *in heaven and in earth do her homage*: the very least as *feeling her care*; and the greatest as not exempted from her power." But, to make the law worthy of this eulogium, it must be *impartial* in itself and *impartially executed*. Can a perversion of judgment proceed from the *bosom of God*? Is it not impious to trace to the bosom of God the base act of the punishing the poor as an admonition to the rich, and, when the rich commit precisely the same offence, to "*wrap it up*" and let them escape? Can the law then be said to have its seat in the bosom of God, of that God who has pronounced his everlasting curse on those, who shall respect persons in judgment? Can the voice of the law be *harmony*, when it is made to pronounce death on the petty thief, while it scarcely passes a censure on the grand robber that strips thousands of their means of existence? Can *harmony* be in a voice like this? And what *care* does

such law take of "*the least*?" How can "the least feel her *care*," when she has nothing for them but a scourge? What is the *care* that "the least" want from the law? To *protect them*. And, against whom? Certainly against the rich and powerful. What *care*, then, do they experience at her hands, if she lash them to the bone, while she "wraps it up" with the rich? Can the law when thus perverted, receive *homage* from all things in heaven and in earth? Homage from the false and base indeed she may receive; homage like that of the Missouri Savages, who address their supplications and thanksgivings to the Devil; the homage of knaves and hypocrites who thrive by her, and of the rich culprits with whom she "wraps it up;" but, "*cursed* be he that perverteth judgment," that respecteth persons in judgment, "and let all the people say, *Amen*." This is the sort of *homage* which perverted law ought to receive from all things in heaven and in earth. This is the sentence which God has pronounced on her corrupt administrators: "the burial of an ass, and to be cast forth from the gates of the city."

Homage is indeed due to just authority. Government, which is only another word for *management*, applied to the affairs of nations, is absolutely necessary to the existence of civil society. Hence the observation that "all power is *from God*." But, then, it must be *just* power; power exercised *according to the laws of God*, and those laws pronounce a curse on partial judges. It must be just power; for the murderer has *power* to execute his deeds; and God has said, "Thou shalt do *no murder*." Therefore we are not to honour those in authority merely because they have power; but, are first to consider, whether the power they have be just in its

origin and whether it be justly and impartially exercised.

Amongst all the powers, with which persons in authority are invested, none are of so much importance to the community, none have so great and immediate an effect on the affairs of men, none have so much to do in producing public happiness, or public misery, as the powers of the Judge. When, therefore, he execute his high office with diligence and impartiality, no respect, no veneration, that we can entertain towards a human being can exceed his merits and our obligations. Of all the spectacles that reflect honour on human nature and that tend to elevate the mind of man, none is equal to that of a Judge, patiently investigating, diligently searching after truth, scrupulously discriminating, and impartially deciding; divested of all passion, leaning neither to the one side nor the other, having no respect of persons in judgment; bold in his integrity, setting at nought the displeasure of power, and having in his mind no fear but that of the possibility of erroneously doing wrong. But, if the reverse of all this characterize the exhibition: if the Judge, instead of endeavouring to elicit truth, employ all his skill and all his talents to envelope it in darkness, to clothe wrong in the garb of right; if, his very looks at the outset declare him a partisan and not a Judge; if petulance and rage mark his inward fear of failing to effect his but too manifest iniquitous intention; if, at last, when coming to award judgment on the rich and on the poor, both guilty of precisely the same offence, he merely shake the lash over the shoulders of the former, and make the forty-lacking one draw thirty-nine streams of blood from the loins of the latter, is not the favoured culprit covered with shame, and the

Judge with infamy? "So they *wrap it up*." But is not every breast filled with indignation? Are they not "*contemptible* and base before all the people?" Is not the curse of God pronounced upon them; and do not all the people say, *Amen!*

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## THE SLUGGARD.

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"Go to the *Ant*, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise; which, having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard! When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep? So shalt thy poverty come like one that travelleth, and thy want like an armed man."—Prov. ch. vi. ver. 6 to 11.

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THE passage chosen for my text is one of the most beautiful that ever was penned; and it contains an exhortation and a warning of great importance to all persons of both sexes and of all ages in all the ranks and the callings of life. Man was born for activity, for exertion, and not to lie in a state like that of those creatures who appear to live for no other purpose than that of increasing in bulk, merely to grow up out of the earth or its products, and, through some channel or other, to return to earth again.

The causes of poverty and want are various. Some are wholly unavoidable; some arise from dissipation; some from downright wickedness of disposition; but, a considerable part of all the

want and misery that, we witness in the world, arises from *sluggishness*; from that hateful laziness, that everlasting hankering after rest, which is so well described and so strongly reprobated in the words of my text.

It is surprising, but not more surprising than true, that a vice, and, indeed, a great sin, so hateful in itself, so injurious to the parties committing it as well as to the community of which they form a part, and so directly in defiance of the word of God, should, in this, and in many other countries, have found a sort of apology in the precepts as well as in the example of those who affect a particular regard for *religion*.

The tribes of impostors of ancient times, who indulged in laziness at the expense of the industrious, affected peculiar devotion to God, dedicated, as they termed it, their bodies to the Lord. As if the body of man can, in any way, be so truly dedicated to its Maker as by its being made to perform those functions for which it was manifestly intended! As if God, who has fashioned man for activity, who has made labour necessary to his health and even to his sustenance, should be pleased with, and should bestow his choicest rewards on, that part of human beings, who have made the least use of their limbs, and who have contrived to exist on the labour of others by assuming the garb of superior piety.

The fanatics of our day are, only in another form, the successors of the impostors of ancient times; and, they are still more mischievous inasmuch as their teaching tends to produce *sluggishness* in others as well as to maintain it in themselves. To teach people to *rely on God*, without, at the same time, teaching them that they are to use their own exertions, is to

delude them to their ruin. God has given the earth and all the elements; but, he has given nothing for our use unaccompanied with the positive and indispensable condition, that we shall, in every case, perform labour, of some sort or other, in a greater or less degree.

Yet, by a misinterpretation, a torturing, an exaggeration, or at least, a misconception of the meaning, of those parts of the Bible, which speak of the vanity and worthlessness of human exertions and worldly cares, a persuasion has been implanted in many minds, that laziness, with its natural consequences, rags and hunger, are not only not displeasing to God, but are amongst the surest outward marks of his especial grace. Why, human exertions and worldly cares are, when pushed beyond certain bounds, vain and worthless, censurable and sinful. But, because, when a man's whole soul is bent on accumulating wealth, for instance; when he labours beyond his strength, grudges himself necessary sustenance, and worries his mind with anxieties as to gain; because this is sinful, is there to be *no labour, no care*, at all? Are we to make no exertions and to make no provision? "*God feedeth the ravens*," says Jesus Christ. In that illustration of his meaning the whole of his doctrine as to worldly cares and exertions is explained. God feedeth the ravens: that is to say, God hath given the ravens wings and claws and beaks, wherewith to go in search of, to obtain, and to carry home, their food. He feeds man in precisely the same way; that is to say, by giving legs, arms and hands.

Yet is there prevailing the delusive idea, that some how or other, food and raiment are to come by the favour of God, without bodily exertion. Plainly and in so many words, this is not, indeed,

avowed. But, the doctrine implies as much. And, the consequences are, that, where this species of fanaticism takes hold of the mind, cheerful exertion ceases, laziness and slovenliness and carelessness succeed, and are hallowed with the name of *trust in God*. All vanities are carefully to be avoided; but of all human vanities, what is at once so mischievous and so despicable as for the sluggard to conceit himself a saint, and to deem the outward and visible marks of his sluggishness, as amongst the proofs of his inward and spiritual grace!

When once this conceit gets into a dwelling the family is ruined; and, one of its first effects is to produce that sort of sluggishness which produces the habit of lolling *late in bed*, the evil effects of which, more particularly, it is my intention now to speak: a habit hostile to nature, injurious to health, productive of want and crimes, disgraceful to parents and ruinous to children.

To lag in bed is against nature. The whole of the animals of the creation rise when they have had a sufficiency of *rest*. None of them *live in bed*. And, except in cases where their security or the obtaining of their food absolutely requires them to retire to rest in the day time, they rise at all times of the year, with the sun, or before him. We cannot see in the dark. Few things can be done in darkness. The day is the time for us to be awake and to be active, and for us to take air. The body and the mind stand in need of repose during the twenty-four hours; and nature as well as reason point out to us, that the night is the time for that repose.

As to *health*, it is, in the true sense of the word, wholly unknown to the sluggard. He may exist in an absence of acute pain; a naturally good con-

stitution may even give him long life; but still he cannot enjoy that which is worthy of the name of health. The morning air is the great invigorator of the body and sustainer of the animal spirit. Whether in towns or in the country, the morning, the three first hours after the dawn of day, is the time to breathe the air freely. What life, what animation, activity and gaiety do we perceive, in all living creatures, *early in the morning*, compared with their state at the setting of the sun! What a difference do we ourselves feel in the air of the morning, if we then rise, compared with that which we meet if we rise when the sun is three hours high!

But, if our general health be greatly injured by sluggishness in the morning, how much does our *sight* suffer from the evening consequences! So notoriously injurious is artificial light to the eyes, that, when they are, from whatever cause, become feeble, the first step towards a cure is to shun such light. It is, in commendation of learned men, said, that they have "wasted much of *midnight oil*;" that is to say, that they have studied until late in the night. A poor compliment, the place of which would be honourable to them supplied by that of their having daily seen the morning dawn. It is against all reason and all experience to believe, that the mind can be as clear and as strong at midnight as at the hour of rising; and, perhaps no small portion of the confusedness, feebleness and folly of the matter which we find in things going under the name of books, is to be ascribed to the circumstance of its having been of midnight origin. We all know from repeated and again repeated experience, that a thing which we in vain endeavour to call to our recollection in the evening, will, at our rising in the morning, occur to us at once and cause us to

be *surprised* at the over night's forgetfulness. It has occurred to innumerable persons to have but a confused notion of a thing in the evening, and, without any new effort, to see the same thing clearly the next morning. This clearly shows, that the morning is the time for the labours of the mind as well as for the labours of the body. What confidence then, can be placed in the studies and deliberations of those who turn day into night? Who begin the employment of the mind, when loads of food and drink, and a mixture of confused sounds, have rendered its workings like those of chaos? When the management of either families or nations (which are only congregations of families) fall, unhappily, into such hands, what have they to expect but error, negligence, confusion and all the consequences of misrule?

Let it not be imagined, that, so that we pass only *a certain number of hours* in bed, it is no matter, as to our health of what part of the twenty-four they consist. It matters very much. The morning air braces the nerves, strengthens the frame, and keeps the mind clear. By lengthening our day at the other end, we lose that which is to be found only at sun-rise and a short time after. The body and mind mutually act upon each other. The pleasures which the morning affords to the mind assist in giving force to the frame; and that force communicates itself to the mind. Even drunkards, who have been early risers, have had long life; but, such as have been sluggards as well as drunkards have seldom lived out half their days.

However, though life is precious with health and though without health it is worth little, it is in a moral point of view that early rising is of the most importance. He who does not rise early can never

make any great exertion for any length of time. It can be in few cases that a man does that *at once*, which is to decide his fate in life. His fortune, his fame, his means of existence even, must generally depend on often-repeated, or long-continued exertion. There must be, in the greater part of cases, a series of acts; a trial of perseverance. Of how much importance is it, then, to crowd as many acts and as much effect as possible into the space of every day?

The day, which does not begin till three hours after the sun is up is *not a day*. It is only a part of one, and that part not the best. If the employment be of a mental nature, the understanding is slow at any time compared to what it is in the morning early; and, it is a fact as notorious as is that of the existence of the world, that, in the affairs of bodily labour, an hour early in the morning is worth two or three after the middle of the day. The man who is not up with the lark is always *behind hand*. He is never *ready*, never to his *word*. If his well-being depend on the good-will of others, he can hardly hope to maintain that good-will, unless he be punctual to his engagements; and punctuality and late rising are wholly incompatible. To the husbandman sluggishness is certain ruin; and, indeed, to every other man who has others to whom to give commands. If the master be stirring, all stirs, and all thrives; but, if he yield to "a little more slumber," all slumbers, and nothing prospers; nothing is successful; nothing wears the face of promise. Could we ascertain with precision, the causes of the decline of all men whom we have before seen in possession of abundant means, we should find no very small part to have had their origin in sluggishness gene-

rally, and more especially in that species of sluggishness which is evinced in late rising.

The *quantity* of labour, of which we are capable, is greatly diminished by beginning it late in the day; but, the *quality* of it also is diminished. Nothing, if done in haste, is done so well as it might be done. How many excuses do we make for the badness of our work, on account of its having been done *in a hurry*! And, how often does this hurry arise from the "folding of the hands to sleep" in the morning! When the sluggish master *does rise*, at last, all is *bustle*, and, it is lucky if any one escape his reproaches. He finds all behind-hand; he finds nothing right; he well knows that the fault is *his own*; but, he, conscious of his indisposition to correct himself, throws the blame on others, and uses his power to disguise from them and from himself too, as far as possible, the shame which justly belongs to himself.

Night-fall always finds the sluggard *busy*, and yet makes him retire *leaving something undone* that ought to have been completed. Hence he is never happy, never *pleased*, never really satisfied; and, all who are so unfortunate as to be, in any degree, dependant on his will or power, lead miserable lives. No sluggard is a cheerful man; ill health, or trouble of some sort, is always preying upon his mind; and, therefore, he is a dull companion, a gloomy inmate, a worthless servant, and a most disagreeable master.

By throwing our labours on the latter part of the day, great additional expense in the performance of them is occasioned, even in cases where they can, by artificial light, be performed at all. Every hour of day-light that is lost, or exchanged for candle-light, by the in-doors tradesman, causes,

in proportion to the magnitude of the work performed, a positive additional expense, besides the loss from inferiority of workmanship and from various other causes. In the management of a *family* the case is nearly the same. And, if a family consist of any considerable number of persons, the expense of supporting it by candle-light exceeds that of supporting it by day-light in the amount of many pounds in the year.

The sluggard must drive off his hours for taking refreshment. Meal after meal is deferred, till a large part of the time spent in eating and drinking consists of hours of darkness. Hence come waste and destruction in all sorts of ways. When we consider the mere *destruction* of useful things, arising from a life by candle-light or lamp-light, we almost regret, that the invention was ever discovered. In cases where *fire* is necessary on account of climate or weather, what an addition to the trouble and expense arises from the keeping of late hours! In the morning activity renders artificial warmth less necessary than it is when the body is without motion; and, from this cause alone, how many millions are annually wasted, and how many families helped on to their ruin! The habit of late hours, like all other evil habits, steals on us by degrees. It places us much by the *fire-side*, to which we become more and more attached, till, at last, we quit it with the greatest reluctance, even to remove to that bed, which is its rival in our affections. Fire, as a thing merely to give us warmth, is, at the very best, a necessary *evil*, and a very great evil too. Ought we not, therefore, to render it as little as possible in degree? Ought we voluntarily, and against our own manifest interest, to augment it? The excuse for sitting up

late frequently is, that we are not disposed to sleep. This, which in time becomes a species of malady, has an obvious and instant cure in *early rising*; for, let it be well borne in mind, that to *lie awake*, is not the same as to *rise*.

Late hours are the chief cause of that destructive practice *gaming*, which is at once the companion, the twin brother, and the rival of *drunkenness*. To game in the morning is seldom seen, even amongst the wretches who make gaming a trade; and, as to the *rudiments* of this species of profligacy, they are uniformly acquired by the fire-side, while waiting for that sleep, which refuses at an early hour to lay its weight on the eye-lids of the morning sleeper. Gaming has *fraud* for its basis. The motive is to get from another a part, or the whole, of what he has, without yielding him any thing in return. The ruinous consequences of gaming are too notorious to be dwelt on in the way of giving information, and they are of too great magnitude to occupy a side place in the enumeration of evils. But, that it is the duty of parents and masters to prevent gaming in their families is evident enough; while it is equally evident, that late hours constitute the greatest of all temptations to that ruinous vice. The child that rises with the sun needs no cards to bring on the time for it to go to sleep.

And, has the master of a family nobody but children whose welfare is committed to his charge? He has apprentices, he has servants, to whom he owes his example, while he has duties to demand from them. It is in vain to work solely by precept; it is in vain for the sluggard to extol the benefits of early rising. He must rise himself, or he may hold his tongue. If the master of a family

keep such hours as necessarily produce gaming and dissipation, who but himself has he to blame, if he have neglectful, profligate and thieving servants; if his substance be wasted, and he himself ruined?

Clearly true as all this is, obvious as are the evils of sluggishness, it is but too true, that this vice, along with general luxury and effeminacy, have been, for years, slowly, but constantly, creeping over the whole community; and, though we well know, that it is a vice, which is not to be cured but by great suffering, even that suffering is, in such a case, to be hailed as a blessing. The Sluggard must, in some way or other, be fed by the labour of other men: *somebody* must suffer for his laziness: wife, children, neighbours, his country; somebody must do more than they ought to, if he do less. There is no state of riches that justifies the sluggard: if he live on his own means, he is contemptible, but if his indulgence be at the expense of others, he is criminal: he is a drone that eats when he gathers not; is worse than nothing in the creation, and very little short of a robber.

If left to depend on his own exertions he speedily receives his due reward. From one step to another he proceeds, till, at last, the very bread is wanting to him. "His *poverty* shall come like one that travelleth and his *want* like an armed man." His poverty shall approach him gradually, and, at last, his want shall be irresistible and shall bring him down, while there is no hand to raise and no heart to pity. When we see the industrious man sinking there are few so callous as not to *wish*, at the least, to hold him out some support; and, if from want of ability in his neighbours, he find not efficient support, he is consoled by their compassion. But, when the Sluggard sinks, not a hand moves,

and not a tongue is heard but to acknowledge the justice of his fate. God has fed him as he feeds the *ravens* : he has given him the means of obtaining food, and he has neglected and rejected those means. The very basis of civil society is, that it shall produce *good to the whole*, and that no man shall suffer from absolute want of food and raiment. But, then, there is this condition, equally clear and imperative, that no man shall be maintained *in his sluggishness* by the toil of the industrious ; for, without this qualification the principle of claim to relief would be intolerably unjust.

In many cases the ruined and fallen man has ignorance to plead ; but the sluggard has no such apology. The light, the darkness, every living thing, the very air he breathes ; all nature ; all that he sees, hears and feels ; every thing urges him to rise with the sun, and to make, in time, due provision for his wants. Like the ant, he stands in need of no guide, overseer or ruler ; but, he needs the industrious disposition of that laborious and persevering little creature, which, if you scatter abroad the whole of its dwelling and its stores, goes, instantly, cheerfully and patiently to work to gather them together again, and carries along at each load four or five times the weight of its body. What a reproach to the sluggard ! With all nature thus incessantly affording him precepts, warning him of the consequences, what excuse has he ? What claim has he, when poverty overtake him, to assistance or compassion ?

When we view sluggishness in all its characteristics and effects, we cannot but wonder, at first thought of the matter, that there should be, in the whole world, such a being as a sluggard. It is, therefore, of importance to trace this disgraceful

vice to its cause. Some men are naturally more slow in their movements, less animated, than others; but, for a man to be a real sluggard, there must be a cause contrary to nature. And, that cause we shall, in almost every instance, find in the *evil example*, or *criminal indulgence* of parents, or masters. The sons and daughters of sluggards will, if not separated from them at a very early age, be sluggards as surely as the young ones of the drone will seek to live on the honey of the bees.

To expect of sluggish parents to teach their children industrious practices would be to set reason at defiance. To exhort them to it would be to cast reproach on the parents themselves. But, industrious parents, through a mistaken kindness, may send forth into the world, a race of Sluggards. Something assuming the name of *fondness*, in the mother, and which, perhaps if thoroughly examined, is unworthy of the name; this, joined to the *want of firmness* in the father, have but too often sent a brood of lazy children from beneath the roof of industrious parents. How careful, then, ought parents to be; how vigilant in watching their own conduct in this respect!

The single man has little to care about. Food and raiment for himself are all he wants. But, the father of a family has duties to perform of a very important and sacred nature; and, if he neglect these, his professions of religion will, as they ought, avail him little. To have children was his own voluntary act, and in that act, he contracted an obligation, not only to use all the means in his power to supply those children with all things necessary to bodily health and decency of appearance, but also to prevent them from being, when grown up, bad men and women.

If suffered to lead a sluggish life, what must be their fate when they go forth into the world? No matter what be their calling in life, they must, except by mere accident, go amongst those who will judge of them solely by their merits; who will value them according to their worth; and will take the services they are able and willing to render as the standard of that worth. What gentleman, what farmer, what merchant, what employer of any description should find an inducement or should have inclination to furnish a sluggard with food, raiment and money? People give part of their substance to others in exchange for something good which they receive, or expect, from those others. No man hires another to help him to eat, drink and sleep. And, this should be borne in mind by all who have to work for their bread; especially by *parents*.

What gentleman will confide his house, his garden, his horses, or any thing in which he takes a delight, or on which he sets a value, to one whom he finds to be a sluggard? What merchant, what trader, will dare turn his back, leaving his affairs to one who needs dragging from his bed in the morning? What farmer can commit the life of even a hen or a duck to a sluggard? And who is to be expected to be the servant of his servant, to rouse him in the morning and follow him throughout the day? If any accident lead a son into the military or naval service, severe indeed is the process by which his cure is effected! The probability is, that, to avoid the means of cure, he exposes himself to an ignominious end, the lamentations at which the parent ought to mix with reproaches on himself.

In the case of females the danger is still greater;

for here, cleanliness and neatness of person are not only proper but requisite; and whoever saw a sluggish woman that was not a slut in her house and a slattern in her person? Who will choose to eat or to wear after the hands of such a woman; and above all things, who, unless he be worthless himself, will choose such a woman for his wife?

And, ought parents, then, to call it kindness, fondness, indulgence, when they are laying the foundation of sluggishness in their children? Is it a proof of love to insure the best possible chance of ruin to the object? The swarms of unhappy creatures, thieves and prostitutes, that we behold in great cities, were not born thieves and prostitutes. They are not such by nature any more than other people. They have been brought to the lowest stage of vice by degrees, and, in numerous cases, the first step has been either inculcated by the example or encouraged by the indulgence of parents. These unhappy persons chiefly consist of turned-off clerks, shopmen, and servants, who, in the first instance, have been discarded on account of their neglect of some part of their duty. For, who that pay for services do not require services for their money? Once, twice, thrice, the master may rouse a sluggish servant in any capacity; but, in time, the most patient and forbearing becomes weary; and, even if his compassion intervene and make him endure beyond the common measure of endurance, he does the painful thing, he, at last, sends the sluggard to fold his hands elsewhere, not without reluctance after all, but from sheer necessity: he must discard him, or his affairs must stand still: in place of being a help, the sluggard is every where a burden.

But he has "*a good character.*" He is honest,

*sober and civil.* Very good, so far; but it is *services*, it is *activity*, it is to *do something*, for which he is again wanted; and, in a short time, he is again found wanting in this, the great purpose for which he has been sought after and contracted with. Nor, if we come fairly to the point, is it *honest* to be a sluggard and neglect to do that which we are paid for doing. To defraud an employer of the labour or care due to him is, in the eye of morality, as bad as to defraud him of his coin or his goods; the only difference being, that, in the former case, there is frequently breach of trust as well as fraud. The defence, or redress, that the employer has is to avoid the sluggard, or, discard him; and, the application of this remedy by successive employers seldom fails to make the poverty of the sluggard advance with steady and rapid steps, and to bring horrid want to stare him in the face.

When parents see their children brought to this state, and into those other melancholy situations to which poverty naturally tends, they seldom carry their reflections back to remote causes. If they were to be just enough to do this, their self-reproaches would be a warning to those who witnessed them. The man for common life, is fashioned soon after he quits the cradle. His *habits then begin*; and they generally fasten themselves on him for even the longest life. How important, then, how sacred, are the duties, and how awful the responsibility, of parents! But, how great also the compensation! Great are the cares; but, there is not one of these cares, which, if duly exercised, is not repaid by the prosperity which it tends to give to the affairs of the parent. "He that gathereth in harvest is a wise son; but he that sleepeth

in harvest is a son that causeth his father shame." But, if the son sleep in harvest, is it not the father's fault?

From their earliest days children should be accustomed to rise with the sun; and, at a very few years old, to have labour or care of some kind imposed upon them. The things they learn when at that age, if to the instruction the *practice* be added, they never forget. It requires no pains, no exertion, no expense to make children rise with the lark and imitate the ant in industry. But, then, you must begin *betimes*, and keep steadily on. In a few years they become of great value in point of earnings. A boy thus reared up is more trustworthy at ten years of age than a sluggish youth at eighteen. What a difference is this in the situation and circumstances of the parents even in the son's boyish days; and what a difference when he becomes a man!

The twig is to be trained in the right direction when *young* and when *very young*, too, or, it must take its chance. The child of seven years old, who has never known what it was to be in bed after day-light, will never, unless pains be taken to corrupt him, be a sluggard. And, is it not then, true *kindness*, true *fondness*, to make a child begin its life with early rising? Is it not also a duty due from parents; and, will the neglect of this important duty find an apology in any thing that their minds can invent?

When the apostle says, that men are to be judged by their *works*, he certainly means *something that they are to do*. Something in the way of *action*; and not a mere forbearance from evil deeds. To abstain from doing wrong is not *to do what is right*. Works are acts, and, in common life, they must

more frequently consist of *bodily exertions* very well known and unnecessary to be defined. And, if we neglect these, and particularly if we neglect to teach them to our children, do we vainly imagine, that we make compensation by passing a large portion of our time in the reading of *Tracts* and the singing of *Hymns*? Yet, of how much laziness, how much neglect, how much want, filth and misery, are these at once the cause and the fancied excuse!

“What have you *done* in the world?” and not “what have you *thought* or *professed to think*?” will, doubtless, be the question. And what *answer* is to be made by him or her, who has spent the better part of the day-light of life in drowsiness and laziness, exerting even the thinking faculties only for the purpose of discovering the means of securing food and raiment out of the fruit of the labour of others? Can any reasonable creature believe, that merely to *believe*, or to profess to *believe*, no matter what the thing believed, is to form a compensation and satisfaction for a neglect of his *real duties* as servant, master or parent? It is an abuse of words to call that *serving God*, which produces a neglect of the means of sustaining ourselves and our families; for, in our very organization, to say nothing of God’s commands and of all his cautions against slothfulness; in our very organization, we find the proof of the duties of diligence and care; and to perform those duties well and truly is the very first service that God requires at our hands.

Look, therefore, upon those to be impostors who would persuade you, that, to be *religious* you must neglect the means of obtaining an abundance of food and raiment; that to secure heaven hereafter, you must be poor, ragged, and almost die with

hunger; that, to be a child of grace, you must be a moving assemblage of skin and bone, distressing to the sight and offensive to the smell; that God delights in sluggards, slovens and sluts, when you can scarcely read ten verses in the books of his laws which do not contain some command or other strictly enjoining industry, cleanliness and decency, and promising to bless with abundance the labours and cares of those who obey those commands.

Let the *mother*, for instance, who has yielded to this pernicious, sluggard-creating fanaticism, think, even now, of the account that she will have to render. "Lord, I have *served* thee most constantly. My tongue has not ceased to sing hymns to thy praise and to groan out *Amen* to the words of my pious guide. I have cast aside all worldly cares; husband, children, all have been abandoned for the great object of securing my precious and immortal soul. My love of thee has left in my breast no room for affection of any other kind; and, I have seen, unmoved, my children in rags and filth crying for that bread which my husband's labour brought, and with which I, for love of thee and my own precious soul, fed the holy man who repaid me with spiritual food. Poverty I have hailed as a blessing; and want has been my constant consolation. That time which worldlings have bestowed on teaching their children to labour, to rise early and to toil through the day, I have spent in thy service, reading and meditating on the pious effusions of our spiritual guides. Tracts and hymns, and not the broom, the needle, or distaff, have been the utensils in my hands; and, such has been my love of thee, and my anxiety to save my soul, that my heart has given to the winds even the fate of

my children, brought to an untimely end through that want of industry and care which my love of thee prevented me from teaching them whether by precept or example!"

Monstrous as this is, it is what truth would demand from but too many mothers; and it is, in fact, what but too many really say in their hearts. Let all such look well at the words of my text. Let them deny that text to be *the word of God*; or let them confess, that true religion consists in imitating the ant and not the drone. At any rate, let them bear in mind, that poverty and want, disgrace and misery, are to be the lot of the sluggard.

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## GOD'S VENGEANCE

AGAINST

MURDERERS.

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Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder. Matt. chap. xix. ver. 18.

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MURDER is a crime of so deep a die; it is so direct a violation of the feelings of humanity; it has something in it so shocking to the very nature of man, that, at first thought, it would appear wholly unnecessary to warn men against the commission of it; and indeed, deliberately to set about such warning, and to remind men of God's denunciations against the murderer, would, on a cursory view of the matter, seem to be almost insult to a christian community.

Unhappily, however, such warnings are necessary: for we but too often see beings bearing the human form capable of dipping their hands in human blood, monsters so unfeeling, so brutal, as wilfully and aforethought to cause, with their own hands, that death, the bare sight of which even when proceeding from natural causes, is deeply affecting to all but callous hearts. With such, indeed, all remonstrance would appear to be vain: those who are deaf to the voice of nature, will hardly listen to that of reason. But, there are murderers who do not slay with their own hands; and there are murders which are perpetrated by means other than those of violence of any sort committed on the body. The murders of this latter description, which are by far the most numerous, are not so obvious, not so plainly seen, as those of the former. They are disguised from the world; they admit of no judicial proof; they escape the utmost vigilance of human laws; they set the just vengeance of those laws at defiance; they are reserved for the vengeance of God, from whom the cool, deliberate; cruel and hypocritical, smiling murderer cannot hide either his deeds or his thoughts.

It is of importance, therefore, for us to come to a clear understanding of the full intent and meaning of the word *murder*. "Thou shalt not *kill*," is one of God's commands; but, that killing may take place without *murder* is very clear, for, in the continuation of those very commands, it is provided, that in some cases the punishment of *death* shall be inflicted; and, to fulfil these provisions of God's laws, there must be *killing*. It is evident, therefore, that, to put men to death according to laws which are *just in themselves* and *impartial in their execution*, is perfectly agreeable to the laws of God;

and, indeed, we very well know, that such killing is unhappily necessary to the safety of every community. Nor was MOSES a *murderer*, when he killed the brutal Egyptian and buried him in the sand. The cruel king of Egypt held the Hebrews in slavery, and had commanded that all their male children should be strangled in their birth. Moses had been preserved by something little short of a miracle, and had, in a secret manner, been brought up to man's estate amongst the Egyptians; and "it came to pass, in those days, that he went out unto his brethren *and looked on their burdens.*" The sight of those, without any thing more, would naturally fill his heart with indignation; but, while in this state of feeling, "he spied an Egyptian *smiting one of his brethren,*" which seems to have been too much for his high and noble mind to endure. He, therefore, having first looked about him and seen that there was no one to make discovery of the deed, "slew the Egyptian and hid him in the sand." Having the next day, reason to suppose that the thing would be made known to the tyrant Pharaoh, he fled into another country. There, however, the God of his fathers found him, tending the flocks, and chose and appointed him to be *the deliverer of his people.* Whence we are compelled to conclude, that the killing of the tyrant's instrument of oppression was not a *criminal* killing; and, of course that it was not a *murder*; but consonant with those laws of God, which this very Moses himself afterwards promulgated to his delivered brethren.

It is not, therefore, the mere *act* of killing, but the *cause* of it, the *motive*, that we are to keep principally in view, when we are to determine, whether such killing come justly under the appellation of

*murder.* And, as to the *manner* of the killing, it is evident that the *criminalness* is not in the least diminished by the circumstance of the deed not being affected by the killer's *own hands* or by those swiftly deadly means which, at once, and directly, assail the body of the object. Whether the killing be perpetrated by our hands, or by those of others who act at our instigation or in furtherance of our well-known wishes; whether the killing be swift or slow; whether it be the dagger, the poisoned cup, or the withholding of food, of raiment, or of necessary care or aid, that we make use of; whether the attack be that of violence on the body itself, or that of more cruel torture inflicted on the mind; still, wherever there is an unjust killing, there is, and must be, a *murder*, and he who causes, or abets, such killing, is a *murderer*. He may, indeed, in certain cases, and even in many cases, be beyond the reach of human laws; but, should his hardened conscience leave him untormented; should he, besides, by secrecy and hypocrisy, escape the execration of man, the final punishment due to the murderer awaits him.

Various are the ways in which the horrid crime of murder is perpetrated. He who *causes death* by unjust means, deliberately used, is a murderer, let those means be what they will. To kill your enemy *in war*, for instance, is not murder; but, to kill him, when he has no longer the power of hurting you, is murder of the most base and detestable kind. Let us remember the denunciation of DAVID, when on his death-bed, against JOAB, 1 Kings, ch. i. ver. 5. "Thou knowest," says the dying king to his son, "what Joab did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner and Amasa, whom he slew, and *shed the blood of war* IN PEACE. Let not, there-

fore, his hoary head *go down to the grave in peace.*"

Nor is the crime at all diminished by the using of *slow* means to produce the death of those whom the chances of war have placed in our hands. If they die of disease; if they perish from hunger or cold; if, in short, their death be caused by our ill treatment of them, they are murdered and we are murderers. We shed the blood of war, in peace; and the fate of the ferocious Joab ought to be ours. We do not, like him, actually put the blood upon our girdle and in our shoes; but, we *cause the death*; and the only difference is, that, what Joab effected openly, and by the sword, we effect by secret, more cruel and more cowardly means.

All *oppressors* are murderers; and murderers too in the strict sense of the word. For shall he be a murderer who causes a *single death*, and he not a murderer who causes millions to suffer and thousands to die, and that, too, to gratify his own ambition, avarice, prodigality, or revenge? "The wicked sitteth in the lurking places in the villages: in secret places doth he *murder* the innocent: his eyes are privily set against the poor." Psalm x. ver. 8. Again in Psalm xciv. ver. 6, "The wicked slay the widow and the stranger, and *murder* the fatherless." Again in HOSEA, ch. vi. ver. 9, "As the troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests *murder* in the way by *consent*:" that is to say, in a deliberate and wilful manner, though, as we gather from the context, by means of lewd and profligate conduct. If a man, having the power, were to cause a particular island, or district, to be deprived of the means of subsistence, and, in consequence, all the people of that island or district were to die of hunger, would not such a

man be a *murderer*? And, would not he be a murderer, then, who, by means only less general, in their operation, were to cause any portion of a people to perish for want in the midst of plenty? This is precisely what the Psalmist has in his eye; this is the secret and base crime, which, in the above-cited passages, he describes; the offence which he justly calls *murder*, and on which he invokes the vengeance of God.

Vain is the hope of him, who hopes to escape this vengeance by skulking from the deed himself, and by causing it to be committed by the hands, or through the *instrumentality of others*. The laws of man hold, that he, who does a thing *by another*, does the thing *himself*. If I employ a ruffian to kill my innocent neighbour, am I not the murderer of my neighbour? It is true that the ruffian is a murderer also; but that by no means diminishes my crime, or takes from me a particle of the hateful character inseparable from that crime. Why, even PHARAOH and HEROD did not kill with their *own hands*. The *Jewish rabble*, who so cruelly stoned STEPHEN to death, were, indeed, murderers; but, were not the *high priests and elders*, who stirred the rabble up and urged them to the deed, murderers also? The actual putting of JESUS CHRIST to death was committed by the *Roman soldiers*; but, though they were murderers, was not PILATE also a murderer, he who placed the victim in their hands, and ordered them to nail him to the cross? And was the crime of this base and corrupt judge washed away by the water in that hypocritical ceremony, wherein he affected sorrow, and laid, as he appeared to hope, the shedding of innocent blood upon the head of the Jews; the head of those despicable wretches, who were under his abso-

lute controul, and whom he treated, in all other cases, as the slaves of the conquerer whose deputy he was?

But, in order to constitute murder, it is not necessary, that a *positive order*, or a *direct instigation*, pass from the chief murderer to his agent. To have a clear right to charge a man with murder, we may stop far short of proofs of this description. To *connive* at unjust killing; to be known to *wish* for it even; either of these is sufficient to constitute murder. HENRY the Second did not *order* the killing of the Bishop of Canterbury; he instigated, *directly*, no one to commit the deed. But, it was known that he *wished* the death of that prelate; the prelate was killed; and, in the end, the King performed the most humiliating penance as a *murderer*. AHAB did not *order* the death of NABOTH. He *instigated nobody* to kill him. He merely, when Naboth was dead, *suffered the deed to remain unpunished*, and took possession of the vineyard which he was known to covet. Yet, the instant he entered on that possession, the punishment due to the murderer was pronounced upon him by the lips of the prophet: "Hast thou *killed* and also *taken possession*? Thus saith the Lord, in the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine." The effeminate, the luxurious, the unprincipled and unfeeling king seems to have been stricken with fear; for he exclaimed, "Hast thou *found me*, O mine enemy!" Found thee, yes! What! didst thou think, that, because thou hadst been wallowing in ease and luxury, while thy corrupt nobles and judges were falsely accusing, were condemning on the oaths of perjured witnesses, were killing in the most cruel manner the innocent owner of the vineyard which thy whim or fancy had fixed on; didst thou think that because thy

cowardice had restrained thee from shedding thy subjects' blood with thine own hands, thou wast not his murderer!

*Find him!* Yes; and, let every murderer, who commits his bloody deeds by the *hands of others*, bear in mind the punishment of this luxurious, cruel and dastardly king. Even his family were to be wholly cut off. "Him that dieth of **AHAB** in the city, *dogs shall eat*; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat." 1 Kings, ch. **xxi.** ver. 24. We find in Holy Writ, denunciations against murderers of no other description so awful as those against this murderer by deputy. And when we come duly to consider the matter, the crime well merited this distinction. **AHAB** was the chief magistrate. It was his duty, in return for the ease and splendour that he enjoyed, to watch without ceasing over the property and lives of his subjects. He had, in this case, seized on the former and destroyed the latter. So far from punishing the murder of his innocent subject, he had applauded it; not, indeed, in *direct terms*; he had not openly thanked the murderers; but, those thanks were too clearly inferred from his silence on the subject, and from his eagerly profiting from the death of the murdered party. It was his duty, his bounden duty, to punish the murderers; and by that means to prevent, as far as in him lay, murders in future. He had ample power to do this; and, therefore, in addition to the crime of this murder, there was on his head that of causing other murders, that of giving his royal countenance to the commission of this horrible crime. And how was he to be suitably punished without extending the punishment to the whole of his wicked race? The streets of the city had been stained with the blood of his innocent and virtuous subject; dogs

had licked *his* blood, and dogs were to lick the blood of Ahab; but, the blood of this contemptible being alone was not sufficient to satisfy divine vengeance, which was therefore extended to his very race.

The laws of God are very minute in discriminating between different degrees of crime. Some crimes are to be atoned for without the loss of life; but, the *murderer* is always positively excluded from any and from all mitigation of punishment. "Moreover, ye shall take *no satisfaction* for the life of a murderer which is guilty of death, but he shall be *surely put to death*." The sin of king AHAH was, therefore, enormous; he was a murderer, and also a *screener of murderers*. The authority and power, with which he had been invested for the protection of the lives of his subjects, he made use of to protect their murderers; and, what good man does not rejoice when he hears the detected and alarmed tyrant exclaim: "Hast thou *found me*!" What a warning to those, in whatever state of life they may be placed, who commit this horrid deed by the hands of others, and who indulge the hope of escaping punishment because their own hands have not been imbrued in the victim's blood!

But, to merit the punishment due to the murderer, it is not necessary that we profit from the deed, or that we wish it to be committed. *Not to punish it*, if we have the power, makes us partakers in the crime, which we commit also, if we, by whatever means, endeavour to screen the actual murderer; for, in either of these cases we adopt the crime; we take it to our bosoms; we commit it in our hearts. The Governor of Pennsylvania, who pardoned two wilful and cruel murderers on their way from the scene of their conviction to the jail door, was, indeed, less horribly criminal than AHAH;

but, did he not adopt their bloody deed; and did he not become a participator in their crime? If we know of a murder having been committed, and make it not known to those who have the power of punishment in their hands, we are deemed, even according to human laws, participators in the crime. What, then, must be the guilt of those who possess that power, if they themselves screen the murderer; if they make use of their power to secure his impunity, instead of insuring his punishment!

Let them not flatter themselves, that they deceive even man, much less God, by giving the name of *mercy* to this perversion of their power. Mercy must operate to prevent severity; and what is so severe as the murderer's deeds, which must necessarily be encouraged and increased by even the hope of finding protection, where, according to all laws, human and divine, punishment signal and *certain* ought to be their reward? To encourage murder, in any shape or in any degree, is to be guilty of cruelty unqualified; to screen the murderer is to give that encouragement; it is to call aloud for the use of the dagger, the knife, the poisoned bowl, and the mid-night torch; and, if it be possible to add to such a crime, the addition can be made only by committing the crime under the hypocritical pretext of *shewing mercy*.

Those murders, however, which are the most worthy of our attention and watchfulness, are such as elude, in most cases, the eye of man, and admit of no proof sufficient to make the offender amenable to human laws. If St. Paul had died in prison, or had been drowned at sea while a prisoner, would not the Roman governors have been *murderers*? The effect being distant from the cause, we are

too apt to lose sight of the crime; but, Paul having been held in bonds *unjustly*, his death, during the time that he was in those bonds, would have made his persecutors, and especially those who had unjustly imprisoned him, murderers. We should, therefore, look well to our ways, when, by any means we acquire power to do any thing, which, even by possibility, may affect the lives of our neighbours. If from false witness, or from perverted law, our neighbour lose his life, though the immediate cause of death be distant from us, the false witnesses or the unjust judges are murderers, and murderers, too, wilful and deliberate. It is no excuse to say, that they did not *mean* actually to *kill* the victim. So says the night-robber, when, in a struggle for the gold, he kills the owner. He only wanted the gold, he did not want the owner's life. But, so far is the law from countenancing such an excuse, that, in the act of breaking in by night, it presumes, as a matter of course, the design to kill, and it justly inflicts the punishment of death accordingly, which punishment, even by the hands of the owner himself, is justified by the laws of God.

Now, night-robbery is by no means so base an act, so deliberately and manifestly foul and wicked, as the giving of false witness, or the pronouncing of an unjust judgment. And, though the effect may not be immediate death, and may not produce death at all; still the crime admits of no extenuation: for, what are the natural consequences of banishment, or seclusion, from friends, wife, children, parents, and all that renders *life dear to man*? If the natural and almost unavoidable consequences are disease, despair, torment of mind, death, or insanity, worse than death itself, how are the guilty

parties to hope to escape that vengeance which is the *murderer's* due? Let all those, therefore, who have any portion of power to exercise over the lives of their neighbours, look well to what they do in that capacity; and not from indolence or from fear of man, do that which may subject him to the awful consequences of a misuse of that power. Let them remember, that, though their ears are not to be annoyed by the plaintive accents of their unfortunate fellow-creature, whose living body they have condemned to a grave, those accents will find their way to that God of justice who has vengeance in his hands, and who has declared that the *murderer* shall not see everlasting life.

If such, if so scrupulous, ought to be our conduct towards our neighbour, that is to say, towards men in general, what ought our conduct to be towards those more immediately dependent upon us, and those connected with us by ties of blood or of contract, and whose lives depend, in many cases, upon our doing our duty by them, and whose death is the probable consequence of a neglect of that duty? When those, whom to supply with food and raiment is our duty as masters or as persons having the guardianship of the indigent committed to our care; when those persons die from want, can we deceive ourselves so far as to believe that we are not murderers, that is to say, if we have withheld from them that which was necessary to sustain life? When, from harsh and repulsive conduct in us, we have made the hapless creatures afraid to put forth a statement of their wants; when we have, from accompanying our scanty relief with reproaches, if not with blows, driven the distressed mortals to wander from door to door, and, at last, to expire under hedges or upon the pavement of the city; or,

to use their small remains of strength and of intellect in satisfying the cravings of hunger by force or by fraud, and, thereby, bringing themselves to an ignominious death; when either of these is the result of the non-performance of our duty, let us not deceive ourselves by not tracing the effect back to the cause; for, in the latter case the offence against the law is *ours* and not *theirs*; and in both cases, wherever death is the effect of our misconduct, though the laws of man cannot reach us, the laws of God declare us to be *murderers*; seeing that this case is precisely that which is in the contemplation of the PSALMIST, when he says, that "the wicked *murders* the innocent, that his eyes are *privily set against the poor*; that he slays the widow and the stranger, and *murders* the fatherless;" he evidently does not allude to murders committed by the sword or by the knife; but to those *unseen killings*, which are effected by the unjust and cruel denying of food and raiment to the indigent part of our fellow-creatures; and to which food and raiment they are as much entitled as the rich man is to his houses and lands.

The wretched and forlorn creature, brought down to the grave by disease engendered from a want of the necessaries of life, is but too generally regarded as having expired from a natural cause. The real cause is so distant from the effect, that it is not perceived, even by the unfortunate victim himself. But that cause is not hidden from the eyes of God, who, by the mouths of his servants and prophets and apostles, from one end of the Bible to the other, warns the rich, and all persons in authority, against oppressions and neglect of the poor. Against doing any thing that has a tendency to humble, to harass, and to injure them. So com-

plete is the word of God as to this point, that, though it strictly forbids *stealing*, it says expressly, in Proverbs, ch. vi. ver. 30, "Men do not despise a thief if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry." This law is not in operation, where the rich from their superabundance are ready to satisfy the calls of hunger in the poor; and especially where the law of the land, as is the case with us, benignantly provides sustenance for every human being in a destitute state. But, this benignant law must be faithfully executed by those in whose hands the execution is lodged; or, it becomes, not a protection to the poor, but the means of most grievous oppression, of endless diseases, of sufferings not to be described, of deaths premature, and innumerable; and, let not those deceive themselves, who are the original cause of these melancholy effects; for, when a human being dies in consequence of a want of that timely relief which has been refused him, a murder has been committed, and those who have refused the relief are murderers.

The apostle says that he who is hard-hearted to his *own kindred* is worse than a heathen. He might have said, and with great truth, worse than any brute beast of which we have any knowledge. The parent that can so act towards a child as to produce its death, whether by want of care, want of good counsel, want of food, of raiment, of any thing within the power of that parent to supply, must be little short of what we generally describe by the word monster. In this case even slight negligences are criminal. What is merely *fault* in other cases is here *crime*. The duty of the parent commences from the moment that the fruit of gratification sees the light; and it never ceases but with the life of one or the other of the parties.

We have, however, instances now and then, not only of a most profligate neglect of these duties ; but of acts committed by parents towards children such as it is impossible to hear of without a mixture of indignation and horror. To abandon a child, in a state of known peril ; to leave that child to the mercy of strangers, and, perhaps, enemies ; to leave a child to be comforted in its dying moments by those wholly unconnected with it by ties of blood ; to suffer it, and wilfully suffer it, to sink into the grave, without the touch of one kindred hand, without hearing the sound of one kindred voice ; to know that it is in imminent peril, and coolly to pursue one's ordinary avocations, expecting every moment to hear that the victim is in its shroud ; this, this of all the offences of which a parent can be guilty ; of all the crimes which can lie upon his head, is surely the greatest ; and, whatever such parents may think ; however completely the laws of man may be inapplicable to his case, that he is a murderer, and the basest and amongst the blackest of murderers, the laws of God sufficiently proclaim.

The duties of parents and children are reciprocal. These latter must consider all their words and actions, as they affect their parents. A bad child, is not only a bad man or woman ; is not only guilty of offences against society ; but, moreover, of a particular offence against the parents. If the parents have faithfully discharged their duty, how great is the crime of the son, for instance, who, by his conduct, wilfully gives them pain ! And yet, how many fathers', and, more especially, how many mothers' grey hairs are brought with sorrow to the grave by the misconduct, the perverseness, the profligacy, the drunkenness or some other incurable

vice of a son! Here there is not only the basest of ingratitude; but a want of feeling; a want of the very essentials of human nature. For what must that breast be made of that can be insensible to the anguish occasioned in the mind of a mother by one over whose life, health and happiness that mother has watched with an anxiety ten thousand times greater than that which she has ever had for her own life? Can such a son see his mother on the death-bed to which he himself has hastened her without saying, "I am a murderer!"

It is a poor paltering with his conscience, to say that he neither stabbed her, poisoned her, nor wished for her death. He knows, that the mental affliction, the harassing cares, the incessant alarms, the constant state of uncertainty and irritation, the grief, the mortification and torment which he has occasioned, have done the deed. He has occasioned in some cases a dread of poverty and ruin; in other cases humiliations too great to be patiently borne; and in every case that worse than viper's sting, the sting of filial ingratitude. For such a son to weep over the corpse of his mother is no compensation; forms no atonement for his conduct; his crime remains the same, simply with the addition of hypocrisy to his other detestable offence.

Still, however, there is one case, which sometimes presents itself in the conduct of profligate and cruel men, which if possible, surpasses in enormity that of the ungrateful and murderous son; namely, the cool, premeditated, persevering and inexorable cruelty of *husband towards wife*. Here, there is every thing that is binding upon man. The law gives him such ample powers of controul with regard to the wife, that there is absolutely no excuse for any thing that can justify or apologize for cruelty on his

part at any subsequent stage of the connexion. He can plead no injuries from caprices, which he has it not in his power constantly to controul. There can be no extravagance, no expensive follies, which he has it not completely in his power instantly to check, if not wholly to prevent. For every deviation from the path of fidelity the law gives him not only effectual but speedy redress. It is in fact a creature of more delicate frame, of quicker sensibility, of feelings more tender and more ardent, placed under his absolute guidance and command. One, moreover, that he has selected by himself, or received with his assent. The connexion is so strictly personal as to admit of no adequate description; and the fate, the happiness or misery (for there is no medium) of this being is so completely within his power, that it appears next to impossible that he can have any ground of complaint, not, in a greater or less degree, ascribable to some act or some omission of his own.

These things duly considered we must know the fact; we must see the proofs with our own eyes or hear them with our own ears to believe it possible, that there are men capable of being guilty of deliberate, malicious barbarity towards a wife. Yet, unhappily, such things we do sometimes witness. The story of AMNON and TAMAR presents us with a true picture of human brutality. The first act of this profligate man was sufficiently detestable; but, when he drives the disconsolate damsel from his presence; when he bids his servant rudely to push her from the door, the blood boils in our veins and we wish the savage ruffian upon the spot that we might instantly inflict upon him some deadly blow, as the best vengeance we can take in behalf of the injured lady. Well might she say, "This evil in *sending*

*me away* is greater than the other thou didst unto me. But he would not hearken unto her. Then he called his servant that ministered unto him, and said, Put now this *woman* out from me, and bolt the door after her. And TAMAR put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours that was on her, and laid her hand on her head, and went on crying." 2 Sam. ch. xiii. ver. 16—19. This picture, of brutality on the one side, and of distress on the other, excites feelings which the tongue cannot express. We thirst for vengeance on the unnatural, the cold-blooded offender; and when we come to the 29th verse of the same chapter, and see AMNON assassinated by men provided for the purpose by the brother of the injured TAMAR, we cannot forbear to exult at the perpetration of the deed, black in itself, and, under ordinary circumstances, calculated to fill us with horror.

Brutal, however, as was the conduct of AMNON, can less be said of the conduct of any husband who treats a wife after the same manner?

If, in the union of the parties a sacrifice has been made to considerations of wealth, of ambition or of any other object, the attainment of which was thought desirable, there is, at least, a *contract* the most solemn, a vow the most awful, that the man will love, cherish and honour the wife. To make her any thing approaching a compensation for the surrender of her freedom and her person, for the surrender indeed of every thing but life itself, demands the complete and literal fulfilment of this vow on the part of the husband. What then must the man be, who can act the part of AMNON, even after he has voluntarily bound himself by the marriage vow? nay, who can do even more than it was in the power of AMNON to do; who can keep the wretched

wife bound by her vows to the end of her life; leave her exposed to every species of calumny; hold her up as a mark for the scorn of the unfeeling and the suspicion of the uncharitable; while he himself, a libertine at large, sets at defiance morality and religion, and makes a merit of that profligate demeanour, the bare suspicion of which is regarded as sufficient to sink his wife into infamy?

It is possible, that cases may arise, when the incompatibility of temper is so great as to render a dissolution of the connexion a matter of mutual relief. This must be an extreme case, indeed; for, *contracts* of no sort are made to be *broken*, and especially contracts of so solemn a character. Before such a contract can be infringed on in the smallest degree, every effort should be made to prevent it; and in no case, except that of an appeal to the law, should such infringement originate with the man, who is not only the most powerful of the parties, but who can suffer nothing from the change, while the wife must, in a greater or less degree, be a sufferer to the end of her life.

At any rate, the unhappy circumstance having occurred, nothing should be done to add to her unavoidable affliction. In short, whether, in this way or in any other, a husband is guilty of cruelty towards a wife, he is fully answerable in the eyes of God for all the effects of that cruelty. In the eyes of man, too, however ineffectual the law may be to reach him, he will not go wholly free from punishment. Persevering malignity towards one to whom we have vowed constant affection for life, is, in the first place, a scandalous breach of fidelity. Such a man may talk of *honour*; but the honour which he possesses would be a disgrace to honest men. His conduct is that of a barbarian and a

coward. To strike a woman; to lift the cane, or draw the sword against her, would consign any man to infamy; but, to do this is far short in point of cowardice as well as of cruelty to the treating of her in a manner that is constantly harassing to her mind, that humbles her in the eyes of her neighbours, and makes her ashamed of her situation, that robs her of all the pleasures of life, and that hastens the termination of that life. To do this, deliberately and coolly to persevere in such a line of conduct bespeaks a heart destitute of every generous sentiment, selfish, cold and base; and if the possessor of that heart escape chastisement from the hand of man, let him remember that there is a God to punish the violater of vows and the murderer of the innocent. Let him not put forward his paltry defence, that he did not use the dagger or the poison. It is he who sends the dagger to the heart: it is he who administers the poison; and, as in the case of the profligate and ungrateful son, he is guilty of a murder a million times more heinous than that of slaying a man capable of combating against him. There is a *meanness* in cruelty towards a wife that is more odious and more detestable than any other quality, which, perhaps, it is possible for man to attribute to man. It far surpasses the drawing of a sword upon a woman, or the smiting of her on the cheek. It sinks man beneath every thing appertaining even to the lowest and most degraded state of humanity; and when we contemplate it we can hardly persuade ourselves that we are looking at the conduct of any thing that bears the name of man. The wretch would almost appear to be beneath the notice of his Creator.

Thank God, this species of offence, this kind of human depravity, but rarely makes its appearance

in the world. Amongst other murderers, however, the barbarous husband was not to be omitted, lest it should be supposed that this enormous sin had not awarded to it a suitable punishment. It is these unseen, these disguised murders, that are most worthy of our attention. For the common cut-throat, the laws of every country provide speedy reprobation and punishment; but, the secret, the disguised, the slow-moving, the persevering, the smiling murderer is to be punished, in this world, only by the just opinions, the deep hatred, and the general execration of mankind; to form, therefore, those opinions, to entertain that hatred and to pour forth those execrations is a sacred duty towards God and towards our neighbour.

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## THE GAMESTER.

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"Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour."—LEVIT. ch. xix. ver. 13.

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VARIOUS are the modes which bad men pursue in order to possess themselves unjustly of that which belong to others. These modes may be classed under three general heads, which, each having its different degrees of guilt, are usually denominated, *robbery*, *theft*, and *fraud*. When the act is perpetrated by open violence, it is robbery; where it conceals itself under the garb of secrecy, it is theft; where the act itself is done with the

knowledge of the party injured, (though, by means of falsehood and deceit, the intent and end are disguised from him,) it is fraud.

The inventions of the fraudulent mind are innumerable. False pretences of all sorts present themselves to it in succession. Feigned distress, feigned friendship, false accounts, false vouchers, forgery, pretended piety, and even pretended love. But, perhaps, of all the fraudulent practices of which we have any knowledge, those of the *gamester* are the most odious in themselves, and most baneful in their consequences; and, if upon examination, we find this to be the case, it is, surely, our duty, not only to refrain from gaming ourselves, but, according to the degree of our power to prevent it in others, and especially in those who may be under our controul, or who are likely to be influenced by our example.

Gaming is sometimes called *play*; but, what is it in *reality*? What is the *object* of every gamester? It is to *gain* by the *loss* of another. The object is not to effect an *exchange* of one thing for another. It is not to render value for value, in any way or under any form. The object of every gamester is, to get by doing injury to his neighbour. It is to get his money or goods from him without yielding him any thing in return; and this, disguise it under what name we may, is *extortion* and *fraud*.

This is not less its character because it as often fail of success as it succeeds in its purpose. The thief is not less a thief when he fail than when he succeed. It is the intention in both cases that constitutes the crime; and, as to the *chance* that you give your neighbour, you *think* that it is *not so good as your chance*; for, this is the very *principle* upon

which you proceed. This thought must necessarily exist in your mind, or you are destitute of motive altogether. You conceal from your neighbour the fact, that you have reason for expecting to get his money from him. You practice *deceit* from the first to the last ; and your sole object is your own private gain to be effected by his loss.

Pretenders to religion, who are at the same time gamesters, are by no means few in number. If, instead of persecuting their neighbours for difference of opinion on points of doctrine, they were themselves to pay attention to the uniform language of Scripture on the subject of *deceit*, and especially of deceit practised for the purpose of unjustly extorting from our neighbour his money or goods, they would, perhaps, cease both to game and persecute. In *LEVITICUS*, ch. iv. the law is clearly laid down. We are, in no case, to *deceive* our neighbour ; and, if we have gotten any thing from him *deceitfully*, we are to restore it to him with a fifth part in addition ; and, then, *atonement* being made, forgiveness is to be obtained.

Now, the very essence of gaming is *deceit*. It is impossible to gain, except *deceitfully* ; for there is deceit in the motive. And, as to the *manner* of accomplishing the end, it presents, perhaps, the strongest possible proof of meanness and baseness of mind. Feigned pleasure, feigned sorrow, feigned applause and feigned reproof : all is false : looks that lie, the lies being too refined to be trusted to the tongue. And all this for the base purpose of gain at your neighbour's expense, and possibly by means of his ruin ! From such a school, who is to expect sincerity, uprightness, or even common humanity ? Accordingly, it is invariably found, that gamesters are amongst the most *unfeeling* as

well as the most fraudulent of mankind. In Virginia and the slave-states of America, nothing is more common than to see the gamester whose purse has been emptied, call in a domestic slave, man, woman, or child, as a *stake* to be *played* for against a sum of money. Thus the drawing of a card, or the turning of a die, may, and frequently does, separate instantly, and for ever, wife from husband, and child from parents! Look at the poor creature that stands trembling by, awaiting the result of the game; and then find, if you can, words to express your abhorrence of those who can give to a deed like this the appellation of *play*!

In this country, indeed, the gamester, thanks to the laws which we inherit from our brave and just forefathers, cannot make the stake consist of human flesh and blood. But, amongst its *consequences*, gaming never fails to bring *want of feeling* towards others. The mind, constantly agitated by selfish hopes and selfish fears, has no time to bestow on country, friends, parents, or children. The pride of ancestry, the inheritance of successors; the past, the future, and even the present, even ordinary pleasures of the day, have no attractions for the gamester: nay, as thousands of instances have proved, *love* itself, the great conqueror of the human heart, is compelled to yield to the cards and dice; for, all-powerful as that passion is in every other case, here it tries its powers in vain.

Hence it is, and many are unfortunate enough to know the fact by experience, gamesters are the most unsocial, cheerless and gloomy of mortals. They appear constantly lost in care. They are plotting against others, or, are absorbed in reflections on their own losses. A want of affection for others, brings in time its natural return; and, at the end of

a few years, men, or women, of this description become objects of contempt, or, at least, of indifference with all around them.

Accustomed to practice deceit; insincerity becoming habitual to him; the gamester suspects every one, confides in no one, and is completely excluded from that inexpressible pleasure and advantage which good and generous minds derive from the placing of unlimited confidence in friends. Confidence, to be real, must be mutual; and, as the gamester never confides, so, no one confides in him. Indeed, his very habits render him unworthy of trust or belief. What he calls his *play* is a regular practising of fraud. His success depends wholly on ability in deceiving. Even the language of the gaming-table, the very terms of his art, are such as to render the commission of fraud familiar to his mind. *Shuffle—cut—trick*; words which express the divers acts that he performs, and all indicating something in the way of lying, or cheating, or both.

To expect to find an honest man in a gamester would be as absurd as to seek for a virgin in the stews. If we have dealings, or contracts, of any sort with him, what is to be expected of him but *trick* and *shuffle*? And, besides, the habitual desire of unjust gain brings him under the old and infallible maxim, that *a covetous man cannot be honest*. Moreover, his necessities at times are such as to bear down every moral principle before them; necessities, too, on account of which he merits no compassion; arising, as they do, not out of his generosity or liberality, as it frequently happens in other men, but out of his sordidness, his greediness of gain, his eagerness unjustly to possess himself of the property of his neighbour.

From a gamester never expect *useful exertion* in any profession, calling, or state of life. To fortune, by honourable means, the path is scarcely ever smooth, and the progress is seldom rapid. The competition is so great, so numerous are the rivals, that nothing short of presumption will place reliance on any thing but *time* and *perseverance*. But, will the gamester rely on these? Will he, the very habit of whose mind is hostile to all steady pursuits; will he, who seeks fortune after fortune gained by a single twirl of the dice-box, ever be brought to place reliance on patient toil or study? Very great has been, and still is, the injury to public morals and private happiness, arising from the conducting of the affairs of commerce, in a mode bearing some resemblance to gaming. Fortunes in great numbers, *suddenly acquired*, are always injurious to a nation. The labourer who sees his companion of last year riding in his carriage this year, will be very apt to grow weary of his spade or his plough. The orange-boy, who, having lost sight of another orange-boy for a few years, finds him again the owner of a lordly mansion and park, will naturally feel no motive to perseverance. These discouraged parties will overlook the act, that thousands have fallen in attempting to keep pace with the lucky adventurers. Those who fall, who and whose families are merely lifted up to be dashed down, are not seen: they sink out of sight for ever. The fortunate only remain to be objects of envy, while the whole mass, if they could be all seen at once, would present a most salutary warning.

Thus is it with the gamester. The fortunate only does he keep in view. Self-love is constantly instilling into his mind, that *he* ought to be as fortunate as they. He loses all relish for any thing

slow in its operation and not attended with enormous gains. Stake after stake are snatched from him: baffled in all his attempts: utterly incapable of honest exertion, he but too frequently resorts to villany of a more vulgar description and more tangible by the law.

How numerous are the instances, wherein crimes the most heinous have been committed for the purpose of obtaining the means of pursuing gaming, or, for that of making up for losses sustained at the gaming table! Masters defrauded by apprentices and clerks; defaulters defrauding the public; forgeries innumerable on friends as well as others; children stealing from their parents; theft and robbery in all their various forms; murder aggravated by every cruelty, and acts of suicide without end! These, O cards and dice, are your works! And yet, not *yours*; but the works of those lawgivers, magistrates, and parents, who, deaf alike to the commands of God and the cries of nature, neglect the most sacred of all their duties.

The nature of gaming is notorious; notorious is its inevitable tendency; and its fatal effects are constantly before our eyes. It is, surely, then, the duty of us all to exert, according to our several stations and capacities, our best means of preventing, or, at least, of checking the growth of, so great an evil. As to lawgivers and magistrates, if it is their duty "to watch over our *public morals*;" if it be their duty to punish a man with uncommon severity for questioning the truth of those doctrines, a belief in which they hold to be conducive to public morals and happiness; if it be their duty to scourge with rods of iron the man who attempts to disturb a belief in that which they hold to be necessary to prevent the commission of crimes; if it

be their duty to do these things, can it be less their duty to allot equal severity to those who are guilty of what is odiously immoral in itself, which naturally and necessarily produces a multitude of the most heinous crimes, which crimes are daily and hourly traced back directly from the gallows to the gaming table?

It is, however, lamentable to perceive, that, in this case, the magistrate is but seldom a terror to evil-doers; that the great are but too often an example to the little in this disgraceful particular; that associations for the openly avowed purpose of gaming, exist in numerous places, and consist, in part, at least, of those whose bounden duty it is to punish the very offence that they are daily in the act of committing; and, which is still more odious, that, on the other side of the Atlantic as well as on this, a youth can appear in scarcely any town, village, or street, without receiving a pressing invitation to game *for the benefit of the state!* The Christian Bishop, who derived a considerable part of his revenue from licenses granted to the stews in his dominions, certainly yields the palm of pre-eminent turpitude to those pretenders to purity, who raise money by lottery for the building of *schools and churches.*

But, let governments and the great act as they may, we, as individuals, have a duty to perform. As neighbours, as individuals, as masters, as parents, we are bound to exert ourselves to the utmost for the preventing of the scandalous and ruinous practice of gaming. And, here, we cannot but lament, that but too many of those, whose immediate and special duty it is to inculcate sound principles of morality; that those, whose office and functions give them such great and general influence, seldom

speaking of this crime in a very decided tone of reprobation. They *qualify* too much. They make *exceptions*. The impression they leave on the minds of their flock is, that the thing is *not wicked in itself*; and that it is merely *capable of being applied to wicked purposes*. And, where is the thing, however good and praiseworthy in itself, of which the same may not be said? The same may be said of every art and science; the same may be said of knowledge, talent, genius and even of religion itself. All may be perverted to bad purposes; but, still, we are not to decry knowledge, talent, genius and religion; and, therefore, we are *not to decry gaming*.

This is the conclusion to which the hearers of the mitigating moralist are led; and thus, the thing not being held to be *wicked in itself*, it is still practised, still taught, and it still goes on producing all its natural consequences. Even he, who has been called "*our great national moralist*," the statue of whom, *as such*, was the first to be placed in the metropolitan cathedral, who was so rigid as to matters of doctrine and discipline, and so little lenient in cases where passions inseparable from our nature pleaded in behalf of the offender; even this, the most rigid and most gloomy of moralists, has his *qualifications* upon the subject of this unmixed evil.

To *game* he denominates "*playing wantonly and extravagantly for money*." So that, according to him, it is not to *game*, unless the play be *wanton, extravagant, and for money*. Now, in another place, he tells us, that *wantonly* means *sportively*; and that *extravagantly* means *wastefully*. So that, according to him, we may *game*, or *play*, provided we do not play *sportively*, or *wastefully*! We must play soberly, seriously, prudently, and not

wastefully; which, if it be not directly to inculcate gaming in its worst sense and form, certainly has no tendency to discourage the growth of that prevalent and destructive vice.

The truth is, teachers of morals, who thus make a compromise with the vice, *game themselves*, and, therefore, dare not speak of it in the manner in which their duty demands. This "great national moralist," as he has been pompously called, gamed occasionally himself. This was known in the circle of his acquaintance, at any rate. He could not, therefore, condemn gaming altogether; and was, for decency's sake, compelled to resort to *qualifications*, to that which might form an excuse for his own conduct; in short, to a compromise with that, against which it was his duty, as a professed moralist, to declare unmitigated and interminable war.

Such, too, is the *real cause* of the hesitating, faltering, feeble language, as to this vice, of the clergy of the established church, in the far greater part of whose families cards and dice are constant inmates. Hence, when they condemn gaming (if they do it at all,) they make so many exceptions; there is so much of mitigation mixed with the censure; that the latter is overlooked, while the former is eagerly seized on. And yet, this mitigation is indispensable; for, it would be too barefaced for a man to bestow unqualified reprobation on a vice, in the hearing of his servants, who had waited on him only a few hours before, while he was actually engaged in the commission of that very vice. And, even if he could find assurance sufficient for this, of what *effect* would be his reprobation, other than that of bringing on him the hatred and contempt due to the hypocrite?

While it is notorious that gaming is practised in the parsonage-house, is it a wonder to find cards and dice at the inns, in the farmer's and tradesman's house, and in the cottage? Is it a wonder to find gaming-tables ready prepared at every great mart or other scene of bustle? Is it a wonder that this vice continues to furnish an ample supply to the jail, the hulks and the gibbet?

But, still, here is no apology, much less a justification, for *individuals*, who neglect their duty in this respect. Every man must, after all, be answerable for his own acts. Evil example, though it be a crime in him who gives it, is no justification of him who follows such example, in whatever degree it may operate in mitigation of his offence. And, indeed, we are seldom, when we come to years of maturity, *deceived* into vice. If misled at all, it is generally by the sophistry of our minds. If we do not wish to be deceived with regard to our moral duties, we seldom are deceived.

*Prevention*, in the case before us, is more easy than in the case of any other vice. Here the parent, ten thousand times for one, has complete and absolute power. Where *nature* is the powerful and ever-urgent prompter, the parent may find great difficulty in restraining his child. The palate, the appetite, the physical organization may have *something* to do with the beastly vices of drunkenness and gluttony. The sluggard's indulgence is shameful and ruinous, but still it is only carrying to criminal excess that love of ease, which is natural to every creature. In all these cases, there is something for the parent *to do*, in order to prevent the vice. There is something in the way of restraint or force for him to employ.

But gaming is a thing wholly unknown to na-

ture. It is prompted by no passion ; by no natural propensity of the mind, no feeling of the heart. No son can have a natural inclination to game, any more than he can have a natural inclination to make shoes. It is a thing that must be *taught* him ; and that, too, not without some considerable degree of pains. It is the *art* and *mystery* of getting possession of our neighbour's property without yielding him any thing in return.

This art, too, is of a nature not to be taught by *stealth* ; not to be communicated in whispers ; not to be clandestinely instilled. It must be taught openly, by repeated lessons, and repeated trials of the pupil's proficiency. The teaching too, must, to be successful, begin at an early age. In short, it must be under the parent's roof ; he himself must be the preceptor, and the emulation must be awakened and kept alive by his own example.

*This is the point* to which we come at last. This brings the matter home to every master and every parent, in one or the other of which capacities almost every man finds himself, at some time or other of his life. As to apprentices and servants, if they play at cards, dice, or any thing in the way of gaming, the master, and the master alone is to blame. For, he has only to forbid, and, in some way or other, to punish for disobedience. If in servants, dismissal ; if in apprentices, the law awards corporal punishment. And, if the master neglect this duty towards them and towards society, he is entitled to no pity, and ought to have little redress from the law, if they defraud him of his money or his goods. He has suffered his house to be a seminary of deceit and fraud ; and, therefore, the injury he complains of is the work of his own hands. He himself is the cause of the tempta-

tion to the crime; and merits redress no more than the husband who should be base enough to assist in the seduction of his own wife.

But, it is the *parent*, the gaming parent, he who, by precept or example, teaches his child the rudiments of this art and mystery of fraud and ruin; it is he who has the serious account to settle with his Maker. To be a gamester in his manhood, the son must have been *taught* when a child; and the parent must have been the *teacher*. It is not pretended, that *all* who play have views positively fraudulent, nor is it pretended, that the example is *always* fatal. But, if only one child out of one hundred, or one thousand, be placed in the path of ruin by the parent, *what a thought!* What parent will dare to talk of *religion*, and, at the same time, voluntarily, and even with pains-taking, expose his child to the risk! Will you give him to drink of a thing merely because that thing does not kill in *all cases*? Will you send him across a wilderness merely because *some* cross it without being devoured by wild beasts? And, will you do these too, without any *possible advantage* in either case?

Yet, no better reason can be given for teaching your son the art of gaming, which, in addition to its other consequences; inevitably leads to late hours, and to all the habits and evils of sluggishness, ignorance and drunkenness. It is a thing bad in its very nature; reason tells us that its direct tendency is to misery and infamy; and daily and hourly experience most amply confirm her dictates. Unhappily she, in too many cases, gives us her warnings in vain, while the annals of the jail and the gibbet blazon forth the triumphs of gaming.

The *winning* gamester's thoughts and feelings are but those of a successful, an undetected and

unpunished thief. The *loser*, the ruined, is absolutely without consolation. Losses arising from other causes are accompanied with some mitigation. If caused by the oppression or injustice of others; even if proceeding from our own negligence or folly; we have, at least, the compassion of our friends, and can endure the comments of our minds. But, the ruined gamester has no resource, either from without or within. Contempt is all he can expect from the mass of mankind; and, how is he to endure existence, when, amidst the scoffs of the world, he looks back on fortune lost by the throw of a die, and lost, too, in the base endeavour to purloin the fortune of another!

Disconsolate father! Distracted mother! You, who are sinking into the earth over the corpse of a self-murdered gaming son! There you behold the result of your own misconduct. It was you who created the fatal taste; it was you who taught his little hands to shuffle and to trick: it was you who taught his infant looks to lie: it was you who implanted in his heart the love of enchanting fraud! Take, then, your just reward: sorrow, remorse and shame, and constant fear for the remainder of your days, to hear even an allusion to him, who, but for your fault, might have been the comfort and pride of your lives, and have borne your name with honour to posterity!

## GOD'S VENGEANCE

### AGAINST PUBLIC ROBBERS.

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"But this is a people robbed and spoiled; they are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison-houses: they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for a spoil, and none saith, Restore." Isaiah, chap. xlii. ver. 22.

"And behold at evening tide trouble; and before the morning he is not. This is the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us." Isaiah, chap. xvii. ver. 14.

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A PUBLIC ROBBER, or robber of the public, is one who robs *the people* of a country, community, or nation. We hear and read sermons enough on the wickedness of stealing from and robbing *individuals*. The crimes of stealing privately in houses; of breaking open dwellings to rob; of robbery committed on the highway; of frauds committed on traders and others; of making false writings for the purposes of fraud; of embezzlement of the goods or money of employers; of marauding in gardens and fields; and even of taking to our own use, in certain cases, wild animals, that have no owner, or proprietor at all: the *sin* of committing these crimes is frequently, though not too frequently, laid before us in colours the most odious, though not more odious than the nature and tendency of it call for.

Those who reprobate acts of this description do right; but, if, at the same time, they carefully abstain from all exposure of the nature of *public robbery*; if they pass that over in silence, and especially if they, by any means, either direct or indirect, give their sanction to, frame an excu: 21.

palliate in any degree, the deeds of the public robber: if such be their conduct, they do wrong; they are the enemies of mankind; they are the foes of justice, morality and religion; and to them applies the question of the prophet Jeremiah, chap. vii. ver. 11. "*Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers?*" To them, and to such a state of things, apply also the words of the prophet Ezekiel, in chap. xxii. beginning at ver. 27. "*Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain. And their prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar.*" Then the text goes on to speak of the robbery, vexation and oppression committed on the defenceless part of the people; and it concludes with these words, which let peculators well remember: "Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them, I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord God."

The robber, be he of what description he may, is seldom at a loss for some excuse or other; for a something in the way of comfort to lay to his soul; for some plea or other wherewith to divert his mind and speak peace to his conscience. But, disguise the thing how we may, all our *receivings*, other than those that come by *free gift*, or that proceed from *value* in some way or other, given or rendered in exchange, are *dishonest receivings*. If they come with the knowledge and consent of the party, but in consequence of deceit practised on him, they are obtained by *fraud*: if taken from him without his knowledge, the act is *stealing*: if taken from him with his knowledge and without his consent, the act is *robbery*. And, can the evil

be less, in the eye of reason or of religion, merely because the robbery is committed *on many* instead of one?

In the case of public robbery no particular sufferer is able to say what precise sum he has been robbed of, by any particular robber in cases where there unhappily be many robbers: but, does this wipe away the *sin*? Are the robbers less robbers for this? The man whose house has been robbed seldom knows precisely what he has lost, and, in many cases, never knows who the robbers are; yet, the the sin of robbery remains the same; and, it remains the same, too, though the robbed person remain for ever unconscious of the robbery.

The public robber, or robber of the people of a country, flatters himself with the excuse, that *he knows not whom the money comes from*; but, does that make any difference in the nature of his offence? Nine times out of ten, the highway robber knows not the person that he robs; and so it frequently is with the thief or burglar. But, these all know well, that they rob *somebody*; and so does the man that robs the people. He knows that somebody must be the loser; he knows, that he robs his neighbours, the people of the whole nation being, in a moral and religious sense, his neighbours; and he knows, that God has said, Leviticus, chap. xix. ver. 13, "Thou shalt not rob thy neighbour."

But, the grand plea of the public-robber is, that *he takes nothing from any one*; that the thing is *given to him by those who do take it*; that it is given him in virtue of something *called law*; that such taking away and such receiving have been *going on for ages and ages*; and, lastly, that if he did not receive that which he does receive in this way, *some other person would*.

As to the first of these, the highway robber may say as much; for in fact, it is the *pistol* and not he, that empties the frightened traveller's purse; and the murderer would have as good a defence, if he laid the bloody deed upon the dagger. But, in some cases, and even in the most flagrantly wicked cases, the public robber may say, that he does not even employ the instrument that actually commits the robbery. But, the main question is, does he *receive the fruit* of the robbery? There never was a country so destitute of moral principles as not to hold the *receiver to be as bad as the thief*; and, therefore, when we *receive*, we have only to ask ourselves, whether the thing received be our *due*; whether we have rendered goods or services in exchange; or whether it came as a *free gift* from the possessor. If neither of these can be answered in the affirmative, our receiving is a robbery of *somebody*, however dark the channel and numerous the hands that the thing received may have passed through.

With regard to the circumstance, that the thing is received in virtue of something bearing the *name of law*, the robber seems to forget, that this may really form an addition to the crime, and render that a piece of cool and cowardly and insolent cruelty, which, without this circumstance, would have been a simple robbery. This is precisely the case, which the prophet Isaiah evidently had in his eye in the beginning of his xth chapter. "*Wo unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed.*" And, to what *end* are these decrees? Why this writing of grievousness? "To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people; that widows may be their prey,

and that they may *rob* the fatherless." This is the end of such unjust laws; and, indeed, it is the great end of all *oppression*; for, there is no pleasure in merely *making a people miserable*; it is in the *gain* that is derived from it that the real object is always to be found.

The *manner* in which public robbers proceed, the *means* by which they effect this their great end, are finely described in the 13th and 14th verses of this same chapter of Isaiah. Speaking of the king of Assyria and of the glory of his high looks, God says, by the mouth of the prophet: "For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am *prudent*: and I have *removed the bounds of the people*, and have *robbed their treasures*, and I have *put down* the inhabitants like a *valiant man*." Alas! how often is that termed *valour* which is, in all respects, as base and cowardly as the act of the thief and the murderer! But, the *means*: "And, my hand hath found as a *nest* the riches of the people; and, as one gathereth eggs that are left, have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that *moved the wing*, or *opened the mouth* or *peeped*."

What a beautiful, what a strong, how animated a description of public and sweeping extortion and robbery! First, the tyrant *removes the bounds* of the people; that is to say the laws which gave them protection against robbery; then he *robs them of their treasures*, which he finds as in a *nest*, which nest he rifles as unfeeling boys rifle the nests of birds; and, finally, he pillages them and puts them down as completely as birds are, when they venture not to move the wing, chirp, or *peep*! Miserable, wretched people! and, Oh! detestable tyrant! And is this tyrant to escape punishment?

Is he to carry it thus to the end? Are the oppressed, the pillaged, the robbed people not to be avenged? "Therefore (ver. 16.) shall the Lord of hosts send among his *fat ones* leanness; and under his glory shall he kindle a burning like the burning of a fire!"

Now, it is not to be supposed, that this audacious, profligate and cruel tyrant committed the robberies with his *own hands* or that he consumed *all the eggs himself*. He must have had numerous instruments in his work of merciless plunder and oppression. He could not, himself, have "*put down the inhabitants*," so that they dared not move, speak, or peep. He must have had bands of ruffians of some sort or other to assist him in this, and many and many a cunning knave to carry on the previous work of *removing the bounds of the people*. But, he must have had sharers in the spoil; in all probability parasites, spies, pimps and harlots. Worthless favourites in crowds would naturally be found in his train, without, at the most, any merit but their excelling in scenes of drunkenness and debauchery. And hence it is that the prophet talks of his *fat ones*; that is to say, the pampered wretches made rich by public plunder, who were to be made *lean*; that is, to be compelled to *disgorge their plunder*, and to be *brought down*.

Yet they had *law* to plead for their doings; but, that was no good plea, seeing that the very foundation of their gains was the *removing of the bounds of the people*; or, in other words, the violating of the laws that gave them security; and, hence it is that the prophet begins his denunciation by exclaiming: "*Wo unto them that decree unrighteous decrees that they may rob the defenceless.*"

As to the plea of the public-robber, that sort of robbery has *been going on for ages and ages*; to what a pitch of senselessness of shame must a man be arrived before he can even *think* of such a plea! Theft and murder have been going on for ages and ages; but, because CAIN murdered ABEL does the murderer of the present day pretend that he has committed no crime? The petty thief, far more modest than the public-robber, never attempts to justify his deeds on the ground of *precedent*; never attempts to excuse himself by appealing to the antiquity of the practice.

But, of all the pleas of the public-robber none is so audacious and bespeaks a heart so callous, as that the robbery, if not committed by him, *would be committed by some other person*. Upon such a plea what crime, what enormity, may not be justified? What justice was there in condemning the *fat ones* of the King of Assyria, if this plea were good for any thing? The presumption always is, that the criminal has done that, which, *without him*, would not have been done. But this plea, which public robbers *always set up*, would infer, that every crime that is committed *must* have been committed by *somebody*; and that the criminal is, in fact, an *unfortunate* person, on whom the lot of committing the crime has fallen? This is to strike at the very root of all justice and all law. Oh, no! Where we find the theft or the murder committed, there we are to look for the thief or the murderer; and, where we find the public robbery, there we are to look for the public-robber; for the *fat one*; and when we find him, on him are we to inflict the sentence of *leanness*. In the evening tide trouble is to be made to come upon him; and before the morning he is *not to be*. This, in the words

of my text, is to be "the portion of them *that spoil us*, and the lot of them *that rob us*."

Extremely various are the disguises worn by the public-robber. The devices and contrivances, by which he glosses over the act, are as numerous as the private terms and signals of common thieves and robbers. He is seldom at a loss for a *name*, under which to commit the act, which name, in its common acceptation, describes something not criminal and often highly meritorious. But, with those who look fully into the matter, these disguises are of no avail. The act of receiving being clearly established, it is for the receiver to show, that he is justly entitled to what he receives. For, *name* the thing how we will, *undue receipt* is fraud, stealing or robbery. The name may be the means of effecting the purpose, and it may secure present impunity; but, it alters not, and cannot alter, the nature of the thing. It cannot lessen the crime in the eyes of God, who has said, that you shall not take from another, except by way of free gift, that which is not *your due*.

It is in vain to pretend ignorance of the *source* of what is obtained unjustly from the public, and to affect to believe, that it is a *gift from some individual*. The *shape* in which it comes may be that of a gift; but, it must retain its original character; and, go where it may, it is still the fruit of robbery; and the receiver as well as the pretended giver are essentially robbers.

In cases of public robbery, the robbed parties are *numerous*; but, they are not to be looked upon as numerous contributors towards the support of *one*; for, the robbers may be *numerous too*; and, in time, the effects of the robbery may surpass in cruelty those of the sword or the pestilence. There

is, in fact, scarcely an evil on the earth equal to this. It is cause as well as effect. It produces oppression of all sorts, and is the end of the thing sought for by, *every sort of oppression*. The tyrant, like the piratical commander, does not enslave men for the mere satisfaction arising from that act; but for the sake of, what he gains out of them. When a tyrant scourges particular slaves, shuts them up in dungeons, or puts them to death, it is, in his ultimate view, that he may rob the mass of his slaves with the greater ease and security: and, without fear of contradiction from the experience of any age or nation, we may assert, that a people has never suffered any great and lasting calamity, except when public-robbery has been the *principal cause*.

We ought, therefore, to hold in greater detestation and to pursue with greater zeal the public than the private robber. The acts of the latter are trifling in their consequences compared with those of the former. The aggregate of all the acts of fraud, stealing, and robbery by private persons, in any community, do not, and cannot, amount to mischief, a tenth, and perhaps not a thousandth, part so great as that produced by the deeds of public-robbers, and especially in cases, such as that described in so forcible a manner by the prophet ISAIAH, where public-robbery is *organised into a system*; and where the robbers have, at last, the effrontery to *boast* of the extent of their robberies. To what a state of wretchedness must a people be reduced, when they are treated like the birds of which the purveyors of tyranny leave nothing in the nest that can *move the wing, open the mouth, or peep!* When a whole nation; when the *many* are thus borne down in order to raise the *few* to an un-

natural height! When, to make a thousand "*fat ones*," a million of beings, many of whom are superior to the *fat ones* in every natural endowment and moral quality, are made miserable; have the fair fruit of their labour forced from them, and, ~~at~~ last, live in a state of such pain and torment as to make them question the justice of their Maker himself? "A people robbed and spoiled, snared in holes, hid in prison-houses, a prey, and none to deliver." Where are we to find an evil equal to this? Where are we to find a crime equal to the crimes of those who reduce a people to such a state? And, where then are law and justice if such criminals are to escape punishment?

But, the evil does not stop with the hunger, the sufferings of all sorts, which must arise from taking away a large part of the fruit of the toil of a thousand and giving it to make *one fat* who does not toil at all; the evil does not stop with the *sufferings* of the many: it goes much further, and, in the end, it makes the many thieves and robbers in their petty way. "Lest I be *poor*, and *steal*," says HAGAR; thereby seeming to take it for granted, that poverty is a pretty sure source of crimes. That it is such all experience teaches us; for every where we find an absence of want amongst the people of a country accompanied with an absence of those crimes which arise from a desire to come at other men's goods.

This is perfectly natural; for, besides the temptations caused by want, the voice of nature itself tells us that it cannot be a crime against God to endeavour to preserve life; and SOLOMON says (6th chap. Prov. 30th ver.) "Men do not despise a thief if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry." And in case of detection, the punishment he allots, is, the restoring of the thing stolen seven-fold, out

of his substance when he shall have any. Upon this, doubtless, was grounded that rule of the civil law, which did not deem it *theft* to take victuals to satisfy the cravings of hunger. But, how is any thing worthy of the name of morality to exist in a state of things like that described in my text? Can a people "robbed and spoiled, snared in holes, hid in prison-houses, a prey" to the "*fat ones*," who leave nothing that "moveth the wing, openeth the mouth, or peepeth;" who, in other words, strip the labourer of the fruit of his sweat, and reduce him to a skeleton; how is any thing worthy of the name of morality to be expected to be found in such a state of things? Is it possible for people who are "robbed and spoiled," and who, if they complain, are "snared in holes" and "hid in prison-houses," to look upon the goods of the "*fat ones*," that is to say, of the robbers and spoilers, as *sacred* from their touch? When a people see, as described by the prophet EZEKIEL, the "*fat ones*" who like "wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, to destroy souls, to get *dishonest gains*;" and when they see the prophets "*daubing* them over with *untempered mortar*;" when a people see these things, who is to expect that people to be *honest*?

An unfortunate mariner, who, captured by Barbary pirates, saw the ruffians strutting on the deck dressed in the several articles of his best attire, could not, though he knew his life must be the price, refrain from venting his execrations on them, who instantly buried their daggers in his body. What contentment, then; what patience; what obedience, except by sheer compulsion; are to be expected from a people "robbed and spoiled," and who, if they make complaint, are shut up in "prison-houses?" They behold the "*fat ones*" wallow-

ing in luxurious enjoyments, eating and drinking to satiety and to surfeiting, revelling and wantoning, wasting and flinging away, seeming to be at a loss, for the means of getting rid of the good things of the earth. Such a people know that all these things are the fruit of their toil. They know, that, *of right*, these things *belong to them*. They behold the public robbers with feelings similar to those with which the captured mariner beheld the barbarous and insolent pirate; and, if they take not vengeance, it can only be for want of the power.

To make men happy in society, there must be laws; to administer these laws there must be contributions on the part of the people. Some must labour with the mind and some with the body; all men require sustenance, and as this is produced only by bodily labour, those who labour with the mind must be maintained by those who labour with the body. In other words, it is the interest as well as the duty, of all the members of every civil society, to contribute according to their means, towards the support of those who transact the public affairs; that is to say, the body of persons who constitute the rulers or government; and he who grudges to do this is a bad member of society, and, at bottom, a *dishonest man*; because, he receives *protection* from the government, and he wishes to evade his share of the expense. Nor will a wise people use a scanty measure in their rewards to those who conduct their concerns, in doing honour to whom they really do honour to themselves. But, this supposes concerns well conducted; and, above all things, an absence of *oppression* on the part of the persons honoured. For, if oppression take place, no matter from what cause, the government has forfeited its claim to support and honour. "*Op-*

*pression*," says SOLOMON, will "surely make a *wise* man mad." And, indeed, what is it but oppression that has caused *all* the convulsions and civil wars that we have read of, either in ancient or modern times?

*Oppression* is not a vague term. It does not mean any thing *fanciful*, and that *may* or *may not* be of consequence to the party oppressed. It means the spoiling or taking away of men's goods or estates by constraint, terror, or force, without having any right thereunto. And, how can this act be so offensive as when it take the shape of public robbery, and when the substance of a people is, as in the case described by the prophet, heaped on the "*fat ones*" by means of extortion and cruelty in the collection, which leaves not a wing to move, a mouth to open, or an eye to peep? Men have ascribed convulsions, rebellions, and sanguinary deeds committed by infuriated multitudes to various causes; but, look at them well; trace them to their causes: see them in their *very beginnings*: and you will *always* find, that they arise out of oppression; that is to say, out of the conduct of the "*fat ones*," who have "found as in a *nest* the riches of the people;" who, stripped of their all, have had nothing to lose; have been unable to see in any thing that could happen a change for the worse; and who have, therefore, gladly embraced any thing promising a change.

What under the sun can be so provoking; so stinging to the heart of man, as to see the fruit of his toil, his skill, his care, devoured by those who, in no possible way, yield him any thing in return? And what must he be made of, who can joyously live on the fruit of the labour of thousands, while those thousands are reduced to beggary and mi-

sery? The public robber frequently passes without crime imputed to him, for want of facility in tracing his crime to the sufferer. But, *he* must know that he commits the crime. He must know, that that which he devoureth is *not his*. Aye, and he knows too, that hunger, nakedness, disease, insanity, and ignominious deaths innumerable, are the consequence of his "*dishonest gains*," for the sake of obtaining which he "*sheds blood and destroys souls*."

Yet, the history of the world is not without its instances of the most odious and cruel public robbery, defended, and even carried on, by men, pretending to extraordinary piety and wearing the garb of uncommonly scrupulous sanctity! It is when the public robber assumes this mask that he is most dangerous; for, having brought himself to make a mockery of God, what belonging to man is to hold him in restraint? The notorious public robber and the pretended saint united in the same person; the "*gain of oppressions*" in one hand, and the manual of piety in the other, is, surely, the most detestable sight that ever met the eye of man. But, let the hypocrite remember, that God has said (Isaiah, ch. lxi. ver. 8.) "*I hate robbery for burnt offering*." And that he has also said, in the words of my text, that trouble and destruction shall, in the end, "*be the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us*."

## THE UNNATURAL MOTHER.

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"Even the Sea-monsters draw out the breast : they give suck to their young ones." Lamentations, chap. iv. ver. 3.

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Of all the sorrows known to mankind, how large a portion, and those sorrows, too, of the most acute, arises from a deficiency of affection in children towards their parents ! We daily see fortunes, the fruit of the industry and care of ages, squandered in a single year. We see fathers and mothers reduced to beggary, or made wretched during the half of their lives by stubborn and profligate children ; or, at the least, their last hours embittered by alarming apprehensions as to the fate of those children. The immediate causes of this misery are usually visible enough ; but, the distant cause, the root of the evil, is seldom so clear before us, and is generally hidden from the parents themselves even more closely than from the rest of the world.

The whole congregation of animated nature tell us with united voice, that it is the province of age to give instruction to youth, of the experienced to teach the inexperienced, and especially of the parent to train up the child. The lioness, after having suckled her whelp, then brings it nourishment suited to its more advanced age, and leads it forth by degrees in search of its prey. The wren, having hatched her brood, first brings them their meals in her bill, then shows them how to peck, next how to take their flights, and, lastly, where to seek their food and how to provide for their security. Here

the duties of these irrational parents cease, and, with them, perhaps, all recollection of the ties of consanguinity. Not so with man. Here the ties continue, or ought to continue, in full force, and to be broken asunder only by the hand of death.

We all know and acknowledge, that it is of the greatest importance to both parties, that children should receive good advice and instruction from parents. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Prov. chap. xx. ver. 6. Indeed, without the instruction of parents what are children? Little better than wild animals. But, to be able to instruct, you must find in the child *a disposition to listen to instruction*; and, to be aided by this disposition, you must have the *deep-rooted affection* of the child; and, to be deep-rooted, it must have been implanted at an early age. The days of the rod soon pass away. Law, interest, *force* of one kind or another, may restrain for a season; but the power of these has its end; and then, if there be not filial affection, the foundation of which is deeply laid in the breast, the parent has no power. Even the brightest example loses half its force, if unsupported by this affection.

This being, then, an object of such vast importance, ought we to neglect any of the means necessary to the securing of it? Ought we to neglect any of those duties on which our own happiness as well as that of our children so mainly depend? Ought we to neglect those things which are manifestly calculated to make our children always listen to us with attention and respect, and to yield us cheerful obedience? What, to parents, are, or, at least, ought to be, all other enjoyments, compared

with those which arise from the love of their children towards them?

Yet, we are not to expect this love without deserving it; without doing those things which are calculated to inspire it and keep it alive. This love is of a *nature* very different indeed from that which we feel towards those not connected with us by ties of blood: they arise from sources wholly different. The latter is inspired by a look or a sound; the former must have *habit*, and early habit, too, to insure its existence in a degree that can render it a motive of action. There is nothing in the form or the features, or voice or motion of the parent to awaken or preserve love in the child. To possess this, therefore, there must be a series of the kindest acts on the part of the parent, beginning even before the child can speak, and never ceasing but with the parent's latest breath. To say to a son, *I am your parent*, is very little. If his own heart do not tell him this, you may as well hold your tongue.

Children are born with dispositions widely different, and are to be treated in a manner suited to those dispositions. But, one thing is applicable to all cases; and that is, that every child ought to be treated with as much kindness and indulgence as is compatible with its own good, and that parents have *no right* to follow their own pleasure or amusements, if, by following them, they neglect their children. They have brought them into the world by their own choice; and, having done that, it is their *first duty* to watch over their infancy with incessant care. They are not to shift those cares on others. These are duties not to be performed by deputy; or, if they be, let not the parents complain if the child's affections follow the performance of the duties.

If this be the case with regard to those duties which may, without any positive violation of the *laws of nature*, be performed by deputy, what are we to say of that species of neglect, or, rather, that species of parental cruelty, alluded to in my text ! If "even the *sea-monsters* draw out the breast and give suck to their young ones," what are we to think of those *mothers*, and mothers pretending to *religion* too, who cast off their children to draw the means of life from a hireling breast ?

In an act of this sort there are injustice, cruelty, baseness, grossness, and all in the extreme degree. The mother's milk is the *birthright* of the child. It is his by nature's decree. Nothing can supply its place. It is a physical impossibility to find another breast precisely suited to his age, his appetite and constitution. Indeed, without his *own* breast, he is but half a child. Besides, even if another breast be found to supply, in some measure, the place of that of which he has been defrauded, it must be to the injury of *another*. Another must be ousted from his birthright to make room for the interloper. There must be *two cast offs* ; two violations of the law of nature ; two unnatural mothers. What must she be who can cast off her own child, and, *for hire*, transfer her breast to another ; and, what must she be, then, who, without any temptation, other than her own gross propensities, can commit her child to the care and the breast of such a hireling !

The cruelty of such a transaction scarcely admits of adequate description. To inflict pain unjustly is cruelty ; and, what pains are not inflicted on these banished children ? He who is the most fortunate ; he who gets the breast, is compelled to swallow what nature did not design for him. Ailments, sufferings, torments of every kind assail even him,

while, at the same time, he has no *mother's care* to alleviate his sufferings. But, what becomes of the child of the hireling? He has neither mother nor breast. He is left to take his chance on food wholly unfit for him; and is, in fact, exposed to die, for the sake of the money, for which his birthright has been sold! And, is this tolerated, or winked at, by that code of laws, which hangs the girl, whose dread of shame and reproach induces her to put an end, at once, to the life of the result of her amours? The crime, in this case, is more *shocking* than in the other; but, is the *wickedness* greater? If we take the motives, in the two cases, fairly into view, we shall see that the heart of her, who destroys her new-born babe, though that heart must be hard enough, may be *less flinty* than that of her who banishes her infant from her breast, in the one case for the sake of *money*, and, in the other case, for purposes *too gross*, too filthy, to be named.

It is a crime, and a crime which the law justly and invariably punishes with death, or with something little short of death, to expose an infant to the manifest hazard of perishing. And, is not every infant *thus exposed* that is robbed of its mother's milk? And, shall such robbery be regarded as no crime at all? If an infant *die* from wilful exposure to wet or cold, is not the act of exposure deemed *murder*, and is not the guilty party put to death, and that, too, with the approbation of all mankind, who, on such occasions, have no pity for the *unnatural mother*? But, is she, actuated by the fear of the displeasure of parents, by the dread of shame and ruin; is she more unnatural, is she, indeed, nearly so unnatural, as the mother, who, without these strong temptations, without any temptation at all, other than those of the most gross or most sordid

description, exposes her infant to die a lingering death, to imbibe disease and feebleness instead of health and strength; who lets out to hire or dries up the fountain from which God and nature say her infant is to draw the means of existence and of vigour?

The *baseness* of the banishing mother is equal to her cruelty. The creature, on whom she inflicts certain suffering and probable death, is *wholly helpless*. He has no friend, no defender, no protector, no one to plead his cause. The callow mouse or the naked bird is not so friendless. No? Has he no *father*? None; for that man is unworthy of the name, who can suffer so foul, so base an act of injustice. Before the babe can be banished from its birthright, father, mother, kindred, all must be base. Look at its little hand, not so big as the top of your thumb; its fingers the size of straws; hear its voice smaller than the softest sounds of the lute; see it turning for the means of life to the limpid and pure stores formed by nature; stand by while its little mouth is taken thence and placed at the nauseating hired mess, and, then, add hypocrisy to cruelty by calling yourself its *father*!

And, what is the *motive*, to the commission of this unnatural crime? For *what reason* is it that the rich mother deprives her child of his birthright? Can she give any? *Dares* she give any? The motives are two in number, the one, that her *beauty* may not suffer from the performance of her most sacred duty; the *other* too gross, too beastly, to be named, except within the walls of a brothel. Let it be observed, however, that, as to the first motive, it is pretty sure to *fail*, if beauty be valued on account of its power over *the husband*. For, the flame of love being past, the fire is kept alive

by nothing so effectually as by the fruit of it ; and, what becomes of this, if the child be banished to a hireling breast ? Of all the things that attach husbands to wives, that make the chain bright as well as strong, is the frequent, the daily, the almost hourly contemplation of that most beautiful and most affecting and endearing of all sights, the infant hugged in the mother's arms and clinging to her breast. The prophet ISAIAH, in announcing the promise of God to his people, has recourse to the figure of mother and child : " 'Then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides and be dandled upon her knees.' "

Those who drive from their bosoms the fruit of their love, drive away the love also, or at least, the best guarantee for its duration. She who closes the fountain of life against her offspring is not a *mother*, and is only *half a wife*. It is not the *exterior* of that fountain that is the real cause of its being an object of admiration. The prophet HOSEA, in calling for a *curse* on the desperately wicked, exclaims : " Give them, O Lord ; what wilt thou give them ? " He hesitates here, as it were to consider, and to think of something peculiarly mortifying and degrading ; and then he proceeds : " Give them a miscarrying womb and *dry breasts* ! " This curse, this degradation, the unnatural mother voluntarily inflicts upon herself ; and, in doing this she breaks in sunder the strongest tie that holds to her the heart of her husband. Let the most beautiful woman in the world be placed before a man of twenty-two ; see him dying in love for her ; give him to know of a certainty that her breasts will be always *dry* ; a train of disgusting ideas rush through his mind, and he, if not the grossest of mankind, is cured in a moment.

It is the interior and not the exterior of the female breast, it is the *thought*, and not the *sight*, that makes the charm. The object of which we are speaking is delightful from first to last. It is one of the things which God has given to man as a reward for his toils and his cares, as a compensation for the numerous troubles and anxieties of life. But I appeal to the husband and father, whether that object has ever, at any stage of life or under any circumstances, appeared so charming in his eyes as in those moments when met by the lips of his child, and whether his wife was ever so close to his heart, as when smiling on the babe at her breast?

It becomes wives, and young wives in particular, to think well of these things; to reflect, that she who disinherits her son from the moment he sees the light, voluntarily abandons *half her claims as a wife* and *all her claims as a mother*. Marriage is an institution intended to secure the careful rearing up of children. But, if mothers cast off their children, the object of the institution is not answered; and that law appears unjust which enforces fidelity in the husband and duty in the child, towards a wife and mother, who has refused to perform her duty towards either. A son, who is able to maintain his mother, is, by law, compelled to do it, in case she stand in need of *relief*. But is this *just*, if the mother have robbed him of that which nature awarded him, and have exposed him to the manifest risk of perishing in his infancy? And, under different circumstances, under circumstances where the law is silent, and where filial affection is the only tie, what affection, what obedience, what respect has she to expect from a son, when that son knows, that she banished him from her breast,

and that he owes his life, and perchance, his diseases and debility, to the mercenary milk of a hireling; when he knows, that, in the true sense of the word, she has made him a *bastard*: it being impossible that a child can be basely born, and it being notorious, that the uniform custom of men has been to give the appellation of *bastard* to all animals borne by one and suckled by another?

Let it not be pretended, that a hireling will feel for the child that which the mother would feel; that she will have the same anxieties and take the same care. Nature, which causes the stream to start when the mother's ear meets the sound of the longing voice of the child, as which of us has not seen the milk of the ewe begin to drop the moment she heard the demanding voice of the lamb, though at the distance of half the field; nature, which creates this wonderful sympathy, gives the lie direct to all such false and hypocritical pretences. When the rival mothers came before Solomon, "The king said, Bring me a sword: divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. Then spake the woman, whose the living child was, unto the king (for her bowels yearned unto her son,) and she said, O, my lord! *give her the living child and in no wise slay it.* But, the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, *but divide it.*" Never was there a more happy illustration of the difference in the feelings of a real and those of a pretended mother. Observe, too, that the hireling must begin by being herself an *unnatural mother*; she must begin by robbing her own offspring of his birthright; by driving him from her breast, and, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, from her sight: she must begin by doing that which even the *sea-monsters* are not guilty of, and which is condemned

by the uniform practice of every beast of the field and every fowl of the air.

And, from a son of such a mother, whether the hirer or the hireling is the mother, when he has escaped death and grown up to manhood, can we expect that obedience, which can only be the effect of filial affection? Solomon, Prov. chap. iv. ver. 1 to 4, in inculcating obedience, states how he listened to his own parents, and gives this reason for his attending to their precepts: "For, I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother." That is, that he was the favourite son of his father, and that his mother loved him in an uncommon degree. This was the foundation on which he rested the obedience of children; this was the cause to which he ascribed his having listened to their advice. But, what, then, is a mother to expect from a son who fails not, and who cannot fail, to know, that he was a cast-off from his mother's breast? What gratitude is he to feel towards one, who, from love of pleasure or from love of gain; from a motive the most grossly disgusting or the most hatefully sordid, left him to take, in a stranger's arms, the even chance of life or death?

The general deportment of mothers towards children that they have driven from their breast is very different from what it would have been if they had duly performed their duties as mothers. The mere act of bringing forth a child is not sufficient to create a lasting affection for him. A season of severe suffering is not calculated to leave behind it a train of pleasing and endearing reflections. It is in her arms and at her breast that he wins her heart for ever, and makes every pang that he feels a double pang to her. "Can a woman," says ISAIAH, (ch. xlix. ver. 15,) *forget her sucking child,*

that she should not have compassion for him?" But, if the mother have merely brought him into the world ; if none of the endearments of the cradle ; if none of the intercourse of babe and nurse have taken place between them ; if the mother have, in the fulness of her fondness and amiable partiality, nothing to relate and to boast of in the history of his first twenty months ; if this space be with her a blank in his life, *she never loves him as a mother ought to love* ; while he, taught by unerring nature, is quick as lightning in penetrating her feelings, and repays her with that indifference and coldness which, though a punishment of great severity, are her just reward.

Wives, and young wives in particular, let me beseech you to reflect on these things. Let me beseech you to cast from you, not your children, but those crafty flatterers who would persuade you, that to preserve your health and your beauty, you must become unjust, cruel, base, gross and unnatural ; that, to provide for your health, you must dam up the fountains the flow of which is in many cases necessary to your very existence ; and that, to make yourselves objects of love, you must cast from you that which of all things in the world is best calculated to rivet to you the hearts of your husbands. But, after all, *old age must come* ; and then where are you to look for the great comforter of old age ; the affection and attention and obedience of children ? For, always bear in mind, that he, who has not known a mother's breast, *has no mother !* As you recede he advances ; while decrepitude and deformity are creeping over you, he is bounding on in all the pride of health, strength and beauty. Tender and most affectionate mother as you may have been, and, as it is to be hoped the far greater

part of you will be, he still stands in need of the command of God : "Hearken unto thy father, and *despise not thy mother when she is old.*" But, if, even in such a case, the precept is necessary, what is to bind the son in cases where, from the unnatural conduct of the mother, the precept does not apply ? If the son have grown to manhood with a knowledge of his infant bastardized state ; for to hide this from him or to make him forget it is impossible ; if he have grown up in habitual coldness and indifference towards you, how are you, when age and deformity and approaching dissolution have laid their hand on you, to expect reverence and attentive listening at his hands ? Nothing is more praiseworthy, nothing more truly amiable, than to see men grown up to the prime of life, listening with attention to the voice of their parents ; but, is this to be looked for, or even hoped for, in the absence of filial affection ? And how, amidst all the other objects of affection, which passion creates in the breast of youth, is that affection to exist, unless implanted in infancy and cherished all the way up to manhood : and how is it to be implanted, if the mother cast off the child to a hireling breast ?

There is indeed, amongst the monsters in human shape, now-and-then a son to be found, who can despise the counsels and even mock at the supplications and tears of the affectionate, and tender mother, whose breast has nourished him ; who has known no joy but in his smiles, and no sorrow but in his wailing ; who has watched with trembling anxiety every quiver of his speechless lips ; to whose heart every writhing of his infant body has been a dagger ; who has wholly forgotten, amidst the dangers of contagion, her own life while his was in danger ; there is, amongst the monsters

in human shape now-and-then to be found the son of such a mother to mock at her supplications and her tears. But, let us hope, that, in England at any rate, such sons are rare indeed. And, even in such a case the mother has this consolation; that the fault has not been hers; that she has done her duty towards God and towards her child; and that, if she have an unnatural son, she has every just and humane heart to sympathise in her sorrows.

But under similar circumstances, what consolation has the *unnatural* mother? How is she who cast her son from her breast, to complain of his want of affection? Old age has overtaken her; the fancied beauty, for which she bartered his birth-right, is gone for ever. The gay hours, which she purloined from the cares of the cradle, are all passed away, and cannot be replaced by the comforting conversation and heart-cheering obedience of her son. She now feels the force of the maxim, *No breast, no mother*. The hireling is more his mother than she. The last stage of life is no season for the officious attention of friends; and he, who would have been worth all the friends in the world, has in his breast no feeling sufficiently strong to draw him to this scene of sadness. If held by some tie of interest, his hypocrisy, which he cannot disguise from the sharp sight of conscious want of duty, only adds to her mortification; and though she roll in riches, she envies the happy mother in rags. Thus without a single ray to dissipate the gloom, she passes on to that grave, on which she knows not a tear will be shed, and in her fate proclaims to the world the truth, which cannot be too often repeated, that the duties of children and those of parents are reciprocal, and that, to insure the performance of the former, the latter must first be performed.

# THE SIN

OF

## FORBIDDING MARRIAGE.

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"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and *doctrines of devils*. Speaking *lies* in *hypocrisy*: having their conscience seared with a hot iron; *forbidding to marry*."—Paul's 1st Epis. to Tim. ch. iv. ver. 1.

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THE holy apostle seems, in the text before us, to have but too plainly and too precisely, described that which we of this nation now, unhappily, behold. The speaking of *lies* has been but too common in all ages. *Hypocrisy*, however, on a widely spread system, upheld by positive schemes, open combinations, compacts and affiliations, has been, let us hope, known in no other country, as it was, happily for our forefathers, unknown in their days of comparative frankness and sincerity. But, the sin, quite peculiar to the present day; that part of the "doctrines of devils" which belongs wholly to the present generation, is, that which *forbids to marry*; and that, too, under the false, hypocritical, and atheistical pretence, that God, while he constantly urges men to increase and multiply; while he does this by general laws as well as by express command, has ordained, that, if they obey these laws, and this command, they shall be *punished* and *destroyed* by their *vices* and their *misery*!

When, in former times, men held unnatural opinions and cherished hellish doctrines, the dread of public odium restrained them from openly promulgating those doctrines. But we live in an age

when public rectitude has ceased to impose such restraint. Those, who hold these "*doctrines of devils*;" who thus declare war against the fundamental laws of nature and of social life, and who set at nought the word, the providence and the power of God, not only utter their doctrines openly and without restraint or fear, but make a boast of their atheistical reveries, become enthusiasts in the cause of daring impiety, form themselves into bands, seek proselytes throughout the country, and in the excess of their insolence, which has been encouraged by public forbearance, they seem at last, to hope to enlist the legislature itself under their banners, and to give the force of law to their inhuman, impious and diabolical principles.

We all know, that marriage is necessary to the very existence of civil society; that, without it, the child would, in fact, have *no father*; that the intercourse between the sexes would be purely casual; and, in short, that there would be neither families nor community. The impious and audacious men, who would fain prevent, or check, the practice of marrying, do not therefore, attempt to defend a total prohibition of the practice; but would check the practice of marrying amongst the *labouring classes*, and would, at the same time, have them punished for having children without being married! Their pretence, is, that, if marriage and breeding children be not *checked* by human laws, that is to say, by *force*, the people will, in time, increase so much in numbers, that there *will not be food sufficient for them*; and that a part of them must be destroyed either by *disease, famine, the sword*, or by *ignominious death*.

Perhaps any thing so directly *atheistical* was never before openly avowed. This is, at once, to

put man upon a level with the beasts of the field. It sets all the laws and commands of God at defiance. It supposes his word to be lies or foolishness; for, in how many parts of Holy Writ does he command to increase and multiply, and in how many other parts does he promise this increase as a proof of his approbation and as a mark of his blessing! "Be ye fruitful and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein." Genesis, ch. ix. ver. 7. Again: "Take a wife; and God Almighty bless thee and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people." Genesis, ch. xxviii. ver. 3. Again in Genesis, ch. xxxv. ver. 11. "And God said unto Jacob, I am God Almighty; be fruitful and multiply." That is to say, *trust in me*; do not fear the want of food or of raiment sufficient for those that shall be born; *I am God Almighty*; I will take care by my unerring laws to provide meat for every mouth. But, the impious men, who would now forbid to marry, clearly do not believe either in the wisdom or the power of God, and, indeed, they cannot believe in the existence of a Supreme Being; or, else they are blasphemers who set his power and vengeance at defiance.

In Numbers, ch. xxxvi. ver. 6. it is written, "Let your young women marry whom they think best." In Psalm cvii. ver. 38. "He *blessed* them also, so that they are multiplied greatly." But, if we were to listen to these modern "sons of Belial," we must regard this as a *curse*, and not as a blessing. The prophet JEREMIAH says, "Take ye wives and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons; and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; that ye may be *increased* and not diminished." Not a word about

checking the increase of people. Not a word of apprehension that marriage and the breeding of children are to produce vice and *misery*!

Can, then, any thing be more impious than the doctrine of these preachers of this "doctrine of devils?" And, are they not directly pointed at in the words of my text? Do they not answer precisely to the description of some that should arise in these latter days, "speaking *lies* in *hypocrisy*, having their conscience seared with a hot iron; *forbidding to marry*?"

What, if these impious and cruel men could have their will, would be the *consequences*? We all know, that the greatest of all earthly blessings are found in the married state. Without woman, what is man? A poor, solitary, misanthropic creature; a rough, uncouth, a hard, unfeeling, and almost brutal being. Take from the heart the passion of love, and life is not worth having: youth has nothing to enjoy, and age nothing to remember with delight. And, without marriage, without selection, without single attachment, what is love? The mere passion is still the same, but leading to a long list of woes instead of pleasures; plunging, in short, a whole community into the miseries of *debauchery* and prostitution, depriving children of the care and protection due from parents, and making a people what a herd of beasts now is.

The preachers of the "doctrines of devils" do not, however, go this length; or, at least, they pretend to stop short of it. They would check the disposition to marry in the *labouring classes* only! If they had selected the *idle* classes there would have been less ground for condemnation. But, let us look a little at their *reasons* for this diabolical proposition. They say, that the labourer, by

marrying and having children, becomes a burden upon the parish ; that he has *no right* to relief from the parish ; that he ought not to have children *unless he himself can maintain them*.

Now, to this there are two answers : **FIRST**, that he has, if indigent, *a right* to relief according to those principles on which civil society stands : **SECOND**, that if he be compelled to *give up part of the fruit of his labour to others*, he has an additional right, and is justified in having children with a view of demanding from those others the means to assist in maintaining them.

As to the first case, which simply supposes the labourer to be destitute of a sufficiency of food and raiment, let us look back at the beginning of civil society. God gave all the land and all its fruits to all the people thereof. He did not award a hundred acres to one and a thousand to another and ten thousand to a third. These are now become *property* ; they are secured to the possessors by the laws ; it is criminal to violate those laws. But, it was not, because it *could not*, be a part of the social compact, that any part of the people then existing were to be bereft of food and of raiment and of the means of obtaining them by their labour. If the whole of the lands of this island, for instance, had been parcelled out into few hands at once, is it to be believed, that, the very next day, the proprietors would have had a right to say to the many, " We will keep all the fruits to ourselves, and you shall starve ; the lands are our *property*, and you have *no right* to any share in their fruits ? " Common sense says that this could not be ; and, yet, if the first proprietors had no such exclusive possession, how came such possession into the hands of their successors ?

If the land of this island were, by any turn of events, by any commercial or financial consequences, to become the property of forty men, would those forty men have a *right* to cause all the rest of the people to *starve* by throwing up their lands to lie fallow, and by merely raising food for themselves and families? The bare supposition is monstrous; and yet, who can deny them this right, if the man in want of food and raiment have *no right* to a share of the fruits of the earth in the shape of relief.

Civil society has no justifiable basis but that of the *general good*. It inflicts partial wrong; it is partial in the distribution of its favours; it causes an unequal distribution of goods; it gives to the feeble what the law of nature gave to the strong; it allots riches to the idiot and poverty to genius; it endows the coward and strips the brave. But, with all its imperfections it is for the *general good*; and this is its basis, and none other it has. But, can it be for the general good, if it leave the indigent to perish, while the proprietors are wallowing in wealth and luxury? Can it be for the general good, if the class who till the land, make the raiment, and build the houses, have *no right* to a share of the fruits of the earth, and if their very existence be to depend on the mere mercy or humour of the proprietors of the land? Can it, in a word, be for the *general good*, if the law do not effectually provide that the many shall not be sacrificed to the avarice or cruelty of the few? Happily the laws bequeathed us by our just and pious forefathers, those laws so consonant with the laws of God, those laws which the preachers of the "doctrines of devils" would now fain overthrow; happily those laws growing out of the basis of civil society, have given

the many a compensation for the loss of the rights of nature, and have said to the proprietors, The land is *yours* ; but no man that treads it shall perish for want.

As to the *second* case ; to tell a man that he loses his claim to relief in consequence of his having children ; is to tell him that he has no right *to love* ; and to tell him that he has no right to love, is to tell him that he has *no right to live* ; that he has no right to carry a heart in his bosom, and no right to breathe the air ! To tell him, that he has no right, except in cases of unavoidable misfortune, to throw the burden of maintaining his children on others is true enough ; but, then, let him for their maintenance have *all* the fruit of his and their labour. Let no part of this hard earned fruit be taken away from his cot and be carried and given to others. Let the proprietors not call upon him for a part of what he has earned, and then tell him, that they are not bound to assist him in the rearing of his family. Nay, in common justice and for mere shame's sake, let them not compel him to come forth and venture his life in their defence, and then tell him, that, if he love, marry, and have children, it is *at his peril* !

Happily the monsters in human form, who have broached this truly hellish doctrine, have, as yet, no power to give it practical effect. If they had, if the execution of it could be, by any possibility, endured, this country, so singularly favoured, so blessed by an all-bountiful Providence, must again become savage and desolate ; for, it is not against the *idle* but against the *laborious*, not against the *drones* but against the *bees*, that these sons of profaneness level their poisonous shafts. If, indeed, it were the idlers, those who live only to consume (I do not use the

words invidiously,) those who do not assist the laborious part of the nation, those who devour and contribute not towards the raising of food; if it were this class that these men sought to prevent from marrying, there might be some apology for the proposition, some reason, on this ground, for an endeavour to prevent an increase of those whose utility in the world is not so apparent. Such might be prevented from marrying upon the ground, that their increase would add nothing to the stock of food, and might be a still greater burden to the laborious part of the community than that same class is at present. Even as applied to those classes, however, the doctrine would be false and impious; for, in all communities there must be *many*, who do not assist in raising food. There must, in every community, be some to live at their *ease*, or there would be no stimulus to labour, *ease* being the great object of industry.

But, no: these daring sons of Belial, so far from proposing to check the increase of those who do not labour, wish to keep down the number of labourers and to load them with heavier burdens in order that those who do not toil may have still more than they now have; in order that the small portion of food and raiment which now goes to sustain the fainting, the sick, the wounded, the worn-out labourer or his helpless children, may be retained to augment the consumption and the enjoyments of those who never perform any toil from the hour of their birth to that of their death! No objection have they to the marriage of these; no objection have they to the feeding with rich food, and clothing in gay attire these classes; no objection have they to the marrying of those, who make no increase in the mass of food or of raiment; they can, without any

complaint, see the offspring of these maintained in idleness, in great numbers; here these impious men can find no objection to marriage, and can discover no evil in an increase of numbers. The words' which God addresses to the industrious, they address to the idle: "Be ye fruitful and multiply." So that, if they could have their blasphemous wishes gratified, society must come to an end, for the earth must remain untilled, raiment unmade, and houses unbuilt.

There are, indeed, two descriptions of men, amongst whom, according to the word of God itself, abstinence from marriage may be laudable, and amongst whom marriage may, in the opinions of some, with reason and piety be *checked*. The first of these are *priests*, or teachers of religion. Saint Paul, in 1 Cor. chap. vii. says, that it is good for teachers to remain unmarried; better to marry than give way to incontinence; but, he strongly recommends, that they abide even as he; that is to say, free from the enjoyments and cares of marriage. And, indeed, when the professions of men are, that they mortify their flesh, that they have devoted their bodies to the Lord, that abstinence is a part of their duty towards God, that to him their vessels are dedicated, and when, on this account, they are maintained free of labour and receive great deference, respect and obedience, it does not seem unreasonable, or unjust, nay, some Christians insist, that it is demanded by decency and piety, that they deny themselves all carnal enjoyments. To this we may add, that the priest has his flock to superintend; that, by the most solemn of vows, he takes on him the *care of souls*; that his business is not only to preach, but to set an example of, the mortification of the flesh; that he is to teach and

watch over the children of others; that he is to visit the sick in houses other than his own; that, in short, the morals, the minds, the souls of his flock are committed to him; and, that all these demand an absence of those domestic delights, cares and anxieties, which reason tells us must, in many cases, be but too incompatible with the diligent and zealous discharge of the duties of the pastor. Hence the urgent recommendation of the great apostle of the christian church to its pastors, "to abide even as I;" and, it is well known, that he abode unmarried, that he abstained from all wordly enjoyments, that he devoted himself to God, and that he even "worked with his hands," that he might have wherewith to assist the indigent.

How different the "doctrine of devils!" This doctrine proposes no check to the marriage of priests of any denomination. *They* may have wives, and as many, one after another, as mortality and choice shall afford them the opportunity of having. *They* are called upon, by these men, "who speak lies in hypocrisy," to practice no "moral restraint." No calamities are anticipated from the increase of *their* offspring, begotten in plenteous ease, and fed and clothed and reared and maintained by the labour of those very classes, to the indigent amongst whom these impious men would forbid marriage on pain of absolute starvation! Properly so maintained, if they please, because agreeably to the settled laws of the land, to which we all owe obedience, and which we are all bound to support; but, if no *check* is demanded here, surely, none can be demanded on those who labour.

As to the other description of persons, alluded to above, the Scripture does not, indeed, speak so

*positively*, but, still, it does speak with sufficient clearness. If the fallen state of man has rendered necessary a description of persons, harsh, unfeeling and cruel by the habits of their calling; a description of persons whose food and raiment are derived from the miseries of others, and whose enjoyments are the fruit of sorrow, who can know no harmony but in quarrels and in strife, whose eyes can see nothing in man's actions and character but what is criminal; a description of persons constantly in search after flaws and faults, and to whose souls of chicane quiet possession of property and spotless innocence in word and deed are as the eyes of the basilisk: if the fallen state of man has created such a description of persons, it does not seem impious to think that human laws should interfere to prevent, or, at least, to check their increase. And, some have thought that this is consonant with ancient usage! Look into the Books of Kings, Chronicles, Jeremiah and Daniel, and you will find, that this description of persons were disqualified to become husbands and fathers; and for a very sufficient reason, namely, that, being necessarily habituated to the practising of harshness and cruelty, they ought not to be permitted to produce their like, and to endanger thereby the hearts and minds and souls of a whole community. When the tyrant AHAH had an act of injustice to execute, the instrument was a person of the calling here alluded to. And, in the memorable case of the unfortunate VASHTI, whom the tyrannical and capricious AHASUERUS turned away, stigmatised and stripped, only because she would not condescend to be set up in public as a show, we find the principal advisers and executors of the barbarous deed to be of that calling to which we are here alluding; and, we find also, that the

persons of that calling were, by means the most effectual, prevented from increasing and multiplying.

But, do the impious preachers of the "doctrines of devils" wish to put a check on the increase of *this* description of persons? Do they wish to prevent *them* from marrying? Do they grudge food and raiment, even to gluttony and drunkenness, and flowing robes and falling locks, to this brazen, bawling, mischief-hatching and pain-inflicting tribe? Do they call on us to put the foot on this viper's nest, from which spring half the miseries of human life? No; but on that of the harmless and industrious plover, which, without any cares, any caressing, any fostering, on our part, gives us food in due season, and sets us an example of gentleness, patience and fortitude!

Thank God, we are not so far debased, so completely lost to all sense of moral and religious feeling, so wholly divested of all that common sense which teaches us to refrain from acts tending to our own destruction, as to listen patiently to this advice, though pressed upon us with all the craft and all the malignity of Satan when he seduced our first parents. If we were, in evil hour, to listen to, and act upon, that advice, what would be the consequences? These speakers of "lies in hypocrisy" pretend, that the increase of the people exceeds the increase in food. Why do they not, then, propose to check the increase of those who *eat* and do *not produce*, instead of those who produce what they themselves eat, and what is eaten by those who produce nothing? Why do they not propose to stop the increase of mouths without hands? Why do they propose to check the increase of the labouring classes and propose no such check on the classes of idlers?

But, this is a false pretence. They well know, that with the mouth come the *hands*; and that, if labour receive its *due reward*, labour itself is a *sufficient check* on the increase of man. What they aim at, is to have the benefit of the labour appropriated solely to the use of the idlers. They would restrain the labourer from marrying, that they and the like of them might enjoy and revel in luxury by means of the further deductions that they would then make from his labour. They, foolish as well as wicked, would check the breed of the drudge that draws the plough, that more of the pasture, the corn and the hay may be devoured by the hunter and the racer; forgetting, that, in proportion as the drudge slackens his traces, the high-blooded breeds must cease to eat.

Besides, if this fiend-like doctrine were adopted, what would be the *moral* consequences? What limits would there be to that promiscuous intercourse, to which the sexes would constantly be impelled by a passion implanted by nature in the breast of every living creature, most amiable in itself, and far too strong to be subdued by any apprehensions to which the human heart is liable? These impious "liars and hypocrites" affect to believe, that young men and women would, out of fear of the law, impose on themselves "*a moral restraint*." What, a moral restraint in defiance of nature, in defiance of their very organization, and in defiance, too, of all the commands and all the promises of God! A *moral restraint* in defiance of these! The very thought is madness as well as impiety; and no law, founded on such a notion, could produce any but immoral consequences, except universal and just contempt and hatred of those who should be so foolish and so detestably wicked as to pass such a law.

The Book of Common Prayer of our reformed church declares to us, that it "is meet for Christian men to marry." It tells us, that "little children are as arrows in the hand of the giant, and *blessed* is the man that hath his quiver full of them." One of the principal causes of dissenting from, and *protesting against*, the Church of our fathers, was, that it did not permit *priests* to marry, though the prohibition was, as we have before seen, sanctioned by, and founded on, the express and urgent recommendation of Saint Paul, who added his great example to the precept; and though, as we have also before seen, the recommendation was backed by numerous and most cogent reasons, connected with the diligent and zealous discharge of the duties of teachers of religion. There have been those who were of opinion, that this was, at bottom, the main point with many of those who made the reformation. But, be that as it may, it is a fact not to be denied, that one great ground of objection to the Catholic church, was, that she did not permit the priests to marry. And, what was the *foundation* of the objection? Why this; that, if not permitted to marry, they would, they *must*, be guilty of *criminal intercourse*; for that, it was to suppose an impossibility, it was to set reason, nature and God at defiance, to suppose, that, without marrying, the priests could preserve their purity.

This is a fact notorious in every part of the world whither the sound of the words *Catholic* and *Protestant* has reached. Well, then, if this objection to the Catholic church were well founded, what becomes of the powers of that "*moral restraint*," which these speakers of "lies in hypocrisy," have now, all of a sudden, discovered for

the use of the whole body of the labouring classes of this kingdom? If men, few in number, educated for the purpose of the ministry, bound by the most solemn vows of chastity, jealous to the last degree for the reputation of their order, practising fasting and abstinence, early and late in their churches, visiting constantly the sick, superstitious in their minds, having the awful spectacle of death almost daily under their eyes, and clothed in a garb which of itself was a deep mortification and an antidote to passion in the beholders; if such men could not contain; if it were deemed *impossible* for such men to restrain themselves; and, if this impossibility were one of the grounds for overturning a Church that had existed amongst our fathers for nine hundred years, what hypocrites must the reformers of this church have been! or, what hypocrites are those who now pretend, that mere "*moral restraint*" is, under a prohibition to marry, of sufficient force to preserve the innocence of farmers' men and maids!

No: adopt this impious doctrine, pass a law to put it in force, and all the bands of society are broken. Stigmatize marriage, and promiscuous intercourse is warranted and encouraged by law. To stay the current of the natural and amiable passions is to war against nature and against God. If the terms of the gratification be changed from the obligations of marriage to the voluntary offerings of affection or caprice, the indulgence can only be the more frequent and followed by effects more calamitous. From a community of fathers, mothers and families of children, this kingdom, so long and so justly famed for kind husbands, virtuous wives, affectionate parents and dutiful children, will become one great brothel of unfeeling paramours,

shameless prostitutes, and miserable homeless bastards. Such is the point at which the greedy and crafty speakers of "lies in hypocrisy" are aiming; but, to that point they will never attain as long as there shall remain amongst us any portion of that justice and humanity, which have always heretofore been inseparable from the name of England.

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## ON THE

## DUTIES OF PARSONS,

## AND ON THE

## INSTITUTION AND OBJECT OF TITHES.

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"Woe to the idle Shepherd that leaveth the flock!" Zechariah, chap. xi. ver. 17.

"Woe be to the Shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the Shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd." Ezekiel, chap. xxxiv. ver. 2—5.

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BLASPHEMY is the outcry of the day. To *blaspheme is to revile God*. But, according to the modern interpretation of the word, blasphemy means the *expressing of a disbelief in the doctrines of the Christian Religion*. Now, does it

not become us to consider a little how it can be that this disbelief, sometimes called *infidelity*, can possibly exist in this country? It may be observed, here, by the way, that Jews are notorious *infidels*; that they profess to ridicule the Christian Religion, and boastingly call its Founder an impostor. Yet, we see that the Jews are not denominated blasphemers. The Jews are not prosecuted. The Jews are, as we well know, a most cherished sect; and are possessed of influence that can hardly be described.

It is not my object, however, to defend, or to apologize for, the entertaining, and much less the promulgating, of principles of infidelity; but, to inquire how it can have happened, that such a continual interference of the secular arm should have been necessary to check the progress of this unbelief. We believe the Christian faith to be true; we believe it to have been the work of God himself; we believe, that by inspiration from Him came the Book of that faith. Now, *truth*, even without any such support; *clear truth* is a thing so strong in itself, that we always firmly rely on its prevailing in the end. How comes it, then, that a truth so important as this, and supported by such authority, should stand in need of the puny assistance of fine and imprisonment? This would naturally surprise us, even if the Christian Religion were left unprovided with a priesthood established by human laws: what, then, must our surprise be, when we reflect, that we have a priesthood, appointed for the sole purpose of upholding this religion, and that that priesthood receive, generally speaking, a tenth part of all the produce of the earth; when we reflect, that the whole of our country is divided into small districts; that each of

these contains a living for a priest ; that, in each of these districts the priest has a church to pray and preach in ; and that his office gives him great direct-power and greater influence in secular as well as spiritual matters ?

Surely an establishment like this ought to be adequate to the supporting of *truth* ; and of truth, too, that has the sanction of the word of God himself ! Surely we ought to hear of no necessity for the interference of lawyers, juries, judges, and gaolers to uphold a belief in this truth ! Yet, we do hear of such interference, and, indeed, we hear of little else ; for the cry of *blasphemy* resounds in the senate as well as in the courts ; and, if we give credit to all we hear, we must believe, that blasphemers actually overspread the land.

Let us, then, see, whether this inundation of infidelity may not possibly be ascribable to the *want of a full performance of duties on the part of this same priesthood*. To assist us in this inquiry, let us first see *what those duties are* ; and this we shall best ascertain by going back into the history of the remuneration provided for those duties ; in other words, into the *history of those tithes*, which now amount to such an enormous sum. Inverting the order in which they here stand, those are the three topics which I mean to discuss in this discourse.

I. I read in a *Tract*, called the "*Husbandman's Manual*," published by the Parson's Booksellers, C. and J. Rivington, for the "*Society for promoting Christian knowledge*," sold for twopence, and said to be "written by a minister in the Country *for the use of his parishioners*," the following words, put into the mouth of the husbandman when he is "*setting forth his tithe* ;" and I have here to beg the reader to observe, that these words are put into the

husbandman's mouth by *his Parson*.—"Now I am setting forth God's portion; and, as it were, offering to him the fruits of my increase: and truly, it would be an ungrateful thing in me to deny Him a tenth part, from whom I receive the whole. But why do I talk of denying it Him? It is in truth robbing Him, to withhold but the least part of this, which the piety of our ancestors hath dedicated to him. Alas! it is what I never had a right to: and when I set forth the tithe, I give him that which never was mine. I never bought it in any purchase, nor do I pay for it any rent. What then? Shall our ancestors engross the whole reward of this piety? No, I am resolved to partake with them; for what they piously gave, I will religiously pay; and I in my heart so far approve of what they have done, that were it left to myself, to set apart what portion I myself should think fit, for the maintenance of God's ministers, I should take care that he, by whom I receive spiritual things, should want nothing of my temporal."

We will not, upon an occasion like this, give utterance to those thoughts which are naturally awakened by the reading of such a passage, written, as the title asserts, to "advance the *Glory of God!*" We will restrain ourselves, in this case, and suppress that indignation, an expression of which this insult to our understandings would fully warrant; but, when *blasphemy* is the outcry of the day, we may appeal to juries and judges, whether a greater, more impudent *mockery* of the name of God than this, was ever printed or uttered by mortal man! Not content with this, however, the impious man, whose writings the "Society for promoting *Christian knowledge*" sends forth, proceeds thus, in a species of *prayer* that he also puts into

the husbandman's mouth : " Do thou therefore, O my God, accept of this tribute which I owe Thee for all thy mercies. It is, I confess, thine own, but do thou accept of me in rendering thee thine own ; for thou, who searchest the hearts, knowest that I do it cheerfully, freely, and willingly. And I beseech thee to keep me in the frame of mind, that I may never covet any man's goods, much less that which is thine. Set a watch, O Lord, over mine eyes and hands, let them never be defiled with rapine and sacrilege ; that so the dreadful curse which followeth the thief may never enter into my house to consume it. And further I pray thee, that of thy mercy thou mayest so bless the labour of my hands, that I may have a large portion yearly dedicated to thy service ; and that in exchange for these things temporal, I may receive the things which are spiritual and eternal."

Monstrous mockery ! But, let us put a few questions to this " Minister in the Country." We will not here ask him how the husbandman can be giving tithe in *exchange* for spiritual food, in those three cases, perhaps, out of five, where he seldom or never sees the face of the parson who receives the tithe ; we will not ask him that, in this place, because a fitter place may offer ; but, we will ask him on what *authority* he call's the tithe " *God's* portion ;" in what part of his word God has commanded any portion at all of the produce of the earth to be given to a Christian Priest ? Does he appeal to the Mosaic Law ? Why, then, does he not keep the *Sabbath* and not the Lord's day ? why does he not kill the Paschal Lamb, and offer up burnt-offerings ? Why does he eat blood, bacon, and hares ? And, particularly, why does he not content himself with a tenth of the "*increase*,"

and not take a tenth of the *crop* ; and, further, why does he not divide his tithe with "the poor, the widow, and the stranger," and not keep it all to himself? And, besides this, why does he not, as the LEVITES did, *renounce*, for himself and his children, *all other worldly possessions*? "And the Levite that is within thy gates; thou shalt not forsake him; for he has *no part nor inheritance with thee*." Deut. chap. xiv. ver. 27.

It is clear, therefore, that he has no foundation on the *Mosaic Law* ; and, as to our Saviour and his apostles, not one word do they say to give countenance to such a claim ; while, on the other hand, they say quite enough to satisfy any man, that they never intended, never so much as thought of, such a mode of maintaining a Christian teacher. In the first place our Lord declares the *Law of Moses* to be abrogated. He sets aside even the Sabbath. And, when the Pharisee in the parable, *vaunted* that he *paid tithes* of all that he possessed, the rebuke he received is quite sufficient to show the degree of merit that Christ allotted to that sort of piety ; and, indeed, this parable seems to have been used for the express purpose of exposing the cunning of the then Jewish priests and the folly of their dupes in relying on the efficacy of paying tithes.

But, what do we want more than the *silence* of our Saviour as to this point? If the tenth of the "*increase*" (for it was not the crop, or gross produce) was intended by him still to be given to the teachers of religion, would he, who was laying down the new law, have never said a single word on so important a matter? Nay, when he was taking leave of his apostles and sending them forth to preach his word, so far is he from talking about *tithes*, that he bids them take neither purse nor

scrip, but to sit down with those who were *willing to receive them*, and to eat *what people had a mind to give them*, adding, that "*the labourer was worthy of his hire.*" That is to say, of food, drink and lodging, while he was *labouring*. And is it on *this*, the only word Jesus Christ ever says about compensation of any sort; is it on *this* that Christian teachers found their claim to *a tenth of the whole of the produce of a country*! If this be the way in which they interpret the Scriptures it is time indeed that we read and judge for ourselves! Oh, no! Not a word did our Saviour say about *tithes*; not a word about *rich* apostles, but enough and enough about *poor* ones; not a word about worldly goods, except to say, that those who wished to possess them could not be his disciples: enough about rendering to *Cæsar* the things that are *Cæsar's*, but not a word about rendering to the priests any thing at all. In short, from one end of the Gospel to the other, he preaches humility, lowliness, an absence of all desire to possess worldly riches, and he expressly enjoins his disciples "*freely to give, as they had freely received.*"

And, as to the apostles, what did they do? Did they not act according to the command of Christ? Did they not live *in common* in all cases where that was practicable? Did they not disclaim all worldly possessions? In Corinthians, chap. ix. St. Paul lays down the rule of compensation; and what is it? Why, that as the "ox was not to be *muzzled* when he was treading out the corn," the teacher was to have food, if necessary, for his teaching, for that God had "*ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.*" But, is here a word about *tithes*? And would the apostle have omitted a thing of so much importance? In an-

other part of the same chapter, he asks: "Who goeth a warfare at any time *at his own charges*? Which clearly shows, that all that was meant was *entertainment on the way*, or when the *preacher was from home*; and, when the preaching was on the spot where the preacher lived, it is clear, from the whole of the Acts of the Apostles and from the whole of the Epistles, that no such thing as compensation, in any shape or of any kind, was thought of. St. Paul, in writing to the teachers in Thessalonica, says: "Study to be quiet and do your own business, and to *work with your own hands as we commanded you*." 1 Thess. chap. iv. ver. 11. And again, in 2 Thess. chap. iii. ver. 8, he bids the teacher remember, "Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail, night and day, *that we might not be chargeable to any*."

And yet this "*Minister in the Country*," whose writings the "Society for the Propagation of *Christian Knowledge*" puts forth, would have us believe, that "*God has set apart*" a tenth part of the whole of the produce of the country for the use of this "Minister" and his brethren! That, for the present, it is so set apart by the *laws*, in England, we know very well; but that is quite another matter; and, as we shall see by-and-by, this law has been *changed* many times, and may, of course, be changed again.

Thus, then, that tithes rest upon no *scriptural* authority is a clear case; and we have next to inquire into their origin and the intended use of them in this kingdom.

This writer of *Tracts* for the "Christian Knowledge Society," wishing to inspire his parishioners with filial piety and to turn it to his own account,

says, that the "*piety of our ancestors* dedicated tithes to God;" and then he exclaims: "shall our ancestors engross the *whole reward* of this piety!" He omits to tell his parishioners, that these "*pious ancestors*" of ours were *Roman Catholics*, against whose faith he *protests*; whose doctrines he calls idolatrous and *damnable*; and from whom he and his fellows, and their Protestant predecessors, *took* those very tithes which those "*pious*" believers in idolatrous and "*damnable doctrines*" dedicated to God! He omits to tell his parishioners this; but, leaves them to believe, that this present church was in existence when tithes were first introduced into England; for, it would have been awkward indeed to extol the piety of those from whom he and his fellows had *taken the tithes away*! But, it becomes us, who are about to inquire whether the present clergy *perform their duties*, to go back to this conduct of these "*pious ancestors*;" for, there, in the *motives* for instituting tithes, we shall find *what those duties were expected to be*; and, in fact, what those duties *now are*.

We have seen that tithes rest on no *scriptural* authority; and we have now to see how they came to exist in England, into which Christianity was not introduced until 600 years after the birth of Christ. In the meanwhile it had made its way over the greater part of the continent of Europe, and the Pope of Rome, as the successor of St. Peter, had long been the head of the Church. In the year 600 the then Pope, whose name was Gregory, sent a monk, whose name was Austin, with 40 others under him, from Rome to England, to convert the English. They landed in Kent, and the king of Kent (there were several kingdoms in England then) received them well, became a con-

vert, and built houses for them at Canterbury. The monks went preaching about Kent, as our missionaries do amongst the Indians. They lived *in common*, and on what people gave them. As the Christian religion extended itself over the country, other such assemblages of priests as that at Canterbury were formed; but these being found insufficient, the lords of great landed estates built churches and parsonage houses on them, and endowed them with lands and *tithes* after the mode in fashion on the Continent. The estate, or district, allotted to a church, now became a *parish*; and in time, dioceses arose, and the division became, as to territory, pretty much what it is now.

Here, then, we learn the *motives* of "our *pious* ancestors" in making these endowments of *tithes*. They wished to have a priest always at hand to *teach the ignorant*, to *baptize children*, to *visit the sick*, to *administer comfort*, to be the *peace-maker*, the *kind friend* and the *guide* of his people. Nor were these *tithes* to be devoured or squandered by the priests. They were divided thus: "Let the Priests receive the tithes of the people, and keep a written account of all that have paid them; and divide them, in the presence of such as fear God, according to canonical authority. Let them set apart the first share for the building and ornaments of the church; and distribute the *second to the poor and strangers with their own hands, in mercy and humility*; and reserve the *third part for themselves*." Elfric's Canons, 24th.

These were the intentions of "our *pious* ancestors;" and this brings us to the second topic of my discourse; namely, the *Duties of the Parsons*.

II. The very *motives* for building churches and endowing them with tithes prove, that the *constant*

*residence* of the priest, or parson, in his parish was his *first duty*; for, what was the endowment for else? And, I state, upon authority as good as any that history can present, that for nearly *five hundred years* after the introduction of Christianity, no such custom prevailed in England as of hiring curates, or other deputies, to supply the place of the parson who had the living. Our "*pious ancestors*" were, therefore, *sensible* as well as pious: they required duties in return for what they settled on the parsons. These parsons were, besides, let it be remembered, *unmarried men*; and if we are to impute (and which in justice we ought) the institution of tithes to the *piety* of our ancestors, we must also impute to their *piety* the establishing of a priesthood not permitted to marry! We must impute this to their piety, and, indeed, to their *wisdom* also; for how obvious are the reasons that the tithes never could be applied according to the intention of the founders, if the priests had wives and families to maintain!

Thus, then, if we be to appeal to our pious ancestors, and pious and praiseworthy we must allow them to have been; if the "Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge" will insist upon referring us to these our ancestors as examples for us to follow as to this great matter of tithes, we have to remind it and the parsons of these *eight things*:—

1. That the doctrines of the Catholic Church, which our pious ancestors endowed with the tithes, are, by our present parsons, declared to be idolatrous and damnable.—
2. That our parsons call the head of that church Antichrist and the whore of Babylon.—
3. That this same "Society for propagation of *Christian Knowledge*" advertise no less than *fourteen* separate works written by our bishops

and archbishops "*against Popery*," that is to say *against* that very faith to support which our *pious* ancestors instituted tithes.—4. That we may be allowed to wonder how it can have come to pass, that, as the *errors* of our pious ancestors were found, at the end of *eleven hundred years*, to be so damnable, the tithes which they granted were *not at all erroneous*, but, as this parson now tells us, were "*dedicated to God*!"—5. That our pious ancestors gave only a third of the tithes to the parsons.—6. That they required the parson to expend a third on the building and ornaments of the church.—7. That they required him to distribute the other third to the poor and the stranger with *his own hands in mercy and humility*.—And, 8. That they required him to be *constantly resident* and *not to marry*, and compelled him to take an oath of celibacy, in order that, divested of the cares and anxieties inseparable from a wife and family, he might wholly devote himself to the service of God, and be in very truth that which the Bible, from one end to the other, requires a priest to be, a faithful and diligent *shepherd* of the religious flock: and, for being which merely in *name*, such woes are pronounced against priests both by prophets and apostles.

Of these eight things we have to remind the parsons, when they tell us to look at the conduct of our *pious* ancestors; and especially when they tell us to follow the *example* of those ancestors with regard to *tithes*. These were the conditions on which the tithes were given, and *this* might be truly said to be dedicating them *to God*. Accordingly we find, that, as long as the tithes were applied to these purposes, there were *no poor-rates*; no *vagrant act* was required; no *church-rates* were demanded of the people; and yet all those magnifi-

cent cathedrals and those churches were built, the beauty and solidity of which are now the monuments of their great, and of our little, minds.

But, above all things, when our parsons bid us look at the piety of our ancestors in this article of tithes, we ought to bear in mind, that the parson of our ancestors *remained always with his flock*; that he was allowed to hire *no substitute*; that he could have but *one living*; and, indeed, that he could *never change from one to another*, but must remain *for life* with the church to which he was first appointed. The Canons of our pious ancestors said this: "Let no priest remove for gain from one church to another, but ever continue in that, to which he was ordained, so long as he lives."

This was truly being a *shepherd*; and, as the parson could have no family of his own, his flock had the whole of his cares, and, indeed, his share of the tithes was necessarily expended in his parish. Will the "Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge" say that this is the case *now*? Will they say, that the parsons now constantly reside on their livings, and that their time and tithes are wholly spent amongst their parishioners? If they cannot say this, let them and the parsons cease to remind us of our pious ancestors, lest we remind them of the *conduct of the parsons* of those ancestors. Indeed, it would be prudent in the present parsons never to remind us either of those ancestors or of their conduct as to matters of religion; because, it is impossible for us, if so minded, not to make comparisons; and, especially when we are bidden to look back to those ancestors for *an example to follow* in matters of this sort; it is impossible for us not to perceive a most monstrous inconsistency in this eulogium on our ancestors, when com-

pared with the assertions of our parsons as to the *errors*, the *idolatry*, the *damnable*ness, of the doctrines, in which those ancestors, during a period of eleven hundred years, lived and died ! We see our parsons, upon every occasion that offers, opposing even the smallest proposed relaxation of the laws which so sorely oppress our Catholic fellow subjects ; that is to say, those who have remained, through three hundred years of persecutions, steady in the faith of their and our pious ancestors. We see our parsons resisting with might and main every measure proposed for relieving the Catholics from any of the restraints that have been imposed upon them, or any of the pains and penalties to which they have been kept continually exposed. We see our parsons yielding readily enough to the free toleration of those who deny the divinity of Christ, who laugh at baptism and the sacrament of the Lord's supper ; but, as to those who adhere to the faith of our pious ancestors, to these our parsons will grant no indulgence. They are so watchful as to these, that when some Catholic ladies proposed to keep a school at Winchester, our parsons called for an *act of parliament*, and obtained it, to prevent those ladies from taking Protestant children into their school, lest those children should be converted to that very faith which was held by our pious ancestors, who founded the churches in which our parsons preach, and who endowed those churches with the tithes that our parsons now receive ; and, observe, for which *endowment* our parsons extol them to the heavens, call them pious, call them wise, while, at the very same moment, they assert, that the bare fact of a man's holding firm to the faith of those pious and wise ancestors ought to be considered as a disqualification for pla-

ces of trust or for the making of laws! Aye, and while they assert this of the *faith* of our pious ancestors, they tell us, through the medium of their "Society for promoting *Christian Knowledge*," that those who gave the tithes to *uphold that faith* "dedicated them to God!"

The human heart is capable of strong feelings, the human tongue of strong expressions; but, did heart ever feel, did tongue ever utter, indignation adequate to this monstrous inconsistency?

But, is it not worth our while, even if it were only for the curiosity of the thing, to inquire how the *tithes*, dedicated to a faith which our parsons hold in *abhorrence*, came to be *possessed by our parsons*? Is it not worth our while to inquire, how it came to pass, that, when our parsons found the *faith* of our ancestors so erroneous as to be called idolatrous and damnable; when they found the faith so bad as to require rooting out even by most cruel penal laws; how it came to pass, that, when they found the faith so utterly abominable; how it came to pass, that when they were pulling down images, confessionals and altars, and were sweeping away all the other memorials of the faith of our pious ancestors, they should have suffered the *parsonage-houses*, the *glebes*, the *tithes*, and even *Easter Offerings* to remain, nay, and have *taken these to themselves*, and to be enjoyed, too, not in *third part*, but in *whole*?

This is a very interesting matter, and an inquiry into it will naturally lead me, by-and-by, to my third and concluding topic, namely, whether the present parsons perform the duties which were in the contemplation of those who endowed the Church with tithes, and whether the alleged *infidelity* of the day, may not possibly be ascribable to the want of a performance of those duties.

The tithes were, as we have seen, given to, and enjoyed, or, rather, administered by, the Catholic priests for about *eleven* out of the *fourteen* hundred years of their existence in England. For the first five out of the eleven, no such thing as *non-residence*, or *stipendiary curating*, was known. After the Normans invaded England these things began; and, in time, by one means or another, by kings and nobles, the parishes were greatly robbed of their tithes, and miserable vicars and curates were placed in the Churches in numerous cases. At last that event which is called the *Reformation* took place; and, the struggle ended in the *overthrow* of the Catholic and the establishment of the Protestant Church, that is to say, a Church which *protests* against the Catholic faith, to *uphold* which the *tithes* had been instituted.

The new parsons, though they *protested* against the *faith* of the Catholic priests, did by no means protest *against the tithes* which had been granted to uphold it. They professed to keep all that was *good*, and to cast off all that was *bad*, of the old church. What *was* good and what bad, we laymen may, perhaps, not be competent judges of; but we know that they *kept* very carefully all the parsonage-houses, all the glebes, all the tithes, all the Easter Offerings, all the surplice fees; and that they *cast off* constant residence, division of tithes into thirds, keeping the churches in repair, living unmarried, and relieving the poor and the stranger with their own hands in mercy and humility. Such, indeed, was their keeping and such their casting off, that the Catholics said, that *protestant parson* meant a person who *protested* against anybody having the Church property but himself!

Our "*pious ancestors*" *complained* most bitterly

of, and several times rose in arms against, this "*Reformation*," which, during its progress, cost many thousands of them their lives in the field and on the gallows and the scaffold, amongst the latter of whom were FISHER, bishop of Rochester, and SIR THOMAS MORE, Lord High Chancellor, who were regarded as two of the most learned as well as most virtuous men of their age. However, the rulers prevailed at last, and, by Act of Parliament after Act of Parliament, the protestant Church, "*as by law established*," became what it now is, allowing the parsons to marry, giving them the whole of the tithes, leaving the Churches to be repaired and the poor to be relieved at the expense of the parishioners, and as to the "*strangers*," whom our "pious ancestors" ordered the parson to relieve "with his own hands in mercy and humility," they, as we well know, are now left to be dealt with by constables and beadles and keepers of bridewells.

No higher than this, therefore, can the present parsons go for any of their claims. They can go no higher than the reign of *Harry the Eighth*, who cast off some of his wives and killed others of them. The Acts of Parliament passed in his reign give them their rights; and hence it is, that they take care to call theirs "the Church of England *as by law established*." This is right enough. We know well, that they have *law*; that they have *Acts of Parliament*, for possessing what was originally given to a Church against which they protest; and we know also, that it would be no "*sacrilege*" if the Parliament were to *take away* that which it had the power to transfer; nay, we know, that the Parliament can, and do, take away part of what is called the Church Property whenever it, in its wisdom, deems it meet to do so; and we know,

that it, not long ago, did take away part of it for ever by the law for what was called the redemption of the land-tax. Of course, that *sacrilege*, which the "Society for promoting Christian Knowledge" talks of is no sacrilege at all; and the Parliament can dispose of this property how it pleases and when it pleases; and can, if it please, apply the whole to public uses, such as those of paying off the Debt, supporting the crown, carrying on war, or any thing else.

In the meanwhile, however, and until it shall please the Parliament to do, in its wisdom and in accordance with the prayers of the people, something of this sort, we allow, we must, in the most unqualified sense, allow, that the parsons have *law* for what they claim. But, in allowing this, we in the same unqualified manner, deny that they have any claim at all except that which is founded on the acts of the Parliament. We deny, that they have any claim, founded on the Mosaic law, or on the Gospel, or on the Epistles, or on the motives, intentions, or usages of our pious ancestors, who endowed the Church with tithes and other things; and, therefore, it only remains for us to inquire what duties were imposed on the present parsons by the laws which transferred the tithes to them; and then we shall see something of how those duties have been performed, and shall be, in conclusion, the better able to form a judgment as to the great object of this discourse; namely, whether the present alleged inundation of infidelity may not possibly be ascribable to the want of a full performance of those duties.

We have seen, that the new laws dispensed with the important duty of remaining unmarried; that they did not require the parson to keep the church in repair and to divide his income with the poor

and the stranger ; but, though the new laws allowed of pluralities and non-residence, to a very great extent, still they did enjoin residence except in certain cases expressly "by law established;" and, they provided, that, if a parson should be absent from his living for a certain length of time, he should be liable, on information being laid against him, to pay a *penalty* of so much a *month* for the time of his absence. This was, to a certain extent, an obligation *to reside* at any rate. If a man had one living, he was to reside upon it; and if more than one, he was to reside upon *one of them*. No *very great hardship*, one would think, for the "*shepherd*" to be where the "*flock*" was. We will say nothing at all here about the *manner* of taking care of the flock, but, we may, I think, insist, that the flock could not have much benefit from the shepherd, if the shepherd did not, for a long time together, go near the place where the flock was ! That, I think, we may venture to assert.

Well, then, let us now see how the law, even the new and relaxed law, was, as to this matter, observed by the parsons of our Protestant Church ; and, this brings us to my third concluding topic.

III. *Whether the present inundation of infidelity may not possibly be ascribable to the want of a full performance of duties on the part of the parsons.* Now, on the ground just stated, I shall suppose it taken for granted, that, if the parson do not live where the flock lives, he can be of no use to it, either in inculcating the faith, or in checking the progress of infidelity ; and, besides this, when the flock see him set his duties, his obligations, his solemn engagements, and the commands and denunciations of God ; when the flock sees the pastor set all these at open defiance, is there not good reason to

fear, that the flock will begin to go astray, to wander from the faith, to doubt greatly of the truth of the thing altogether; in short, to become unbelievers, or *infidels*: and in the fashionable language of the day, *blasphemers*?

The prophet Zechariah, in the words of a part of my text, has, manifestly, such a result in his eye when he cries, "Woe on the shepherd that *leaveth* his flock." And the prophet *Ezekiel*, in the other parts of my text, clearly means to impress the same thing on the minds of the priests. What, indeed, can be more just, than that *woe* should fall upon those, who "*eat the fat* and clothe themselves with the *wool*" but who feed not the flock! Who strengthen not the diseased, who heal not the sick, who bring back not those that have been driven away, who seek not the lost, but who, "*rule the flock with force* and with *cruelty*?" Must not the flock be *scattered*, in such a case? Must they not wander? And, as to the shepherds, "Thus saith the Lord God; behold I am *against the shepherds*; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds *feed themselves any more*: for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them."

Nor are Christ and his Apostles silent upon this great subject. Paul, in writing to Timothy, says: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine." The Apostle tells the teachers to teach publicly "from house to house; to show themselves in all things patterns of good works; to be examples in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in purity; to warn every man, to teach every man in wisdom, that they may present every man

perfect in Jesus Christ." The teachers of the gospel are called Ambassadors, Stewards, Shepherds, Watchmen, Guides, Lights, Examples. But, how are they to be any of these, if they seldom or never *see* any of those, whom they have pledged themselves to teach?

Jesus Christ says, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel unto every creature; and, lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." And the apostle Paul, amongst his numerous urgent and solemn exhortations says, in Acts, chap. xx. ver. 27. "I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have shunned not to declare unto you the counsel of God. Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." And he exhorts, too, that the teachers should do their duty for religion sake, and not for the sake of *gain*. A *Bishop* is not to be "greedy of filthy lucre, nor covetous."—1 Tim. chap. iii. ver. 3. And the same in Titus, chap. i. ver. 7. And Peter, in Epist. 1. chap. v. ver. 2. has this exhortation, which ought to be written on the heart of every Christian teacher. "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for *filthy lucre*, but of a ready mind. Neither as being *lords* over God's heritage, but being *examples to the flock*. And, when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a *crown of glory* that fadeth not away."

What then! Can we, with all this before us, believe, that a parson does his duty, if he do not even reside in the same place with his flock? And, when we see a man taking the income of two or three

livings, and seldom or never go near either of them, are we still to look upon him as a follower of the apostles, and entitled to the respect and reverence that is due to their memories and names? I will say not a single word about the *morals* of our parsons; about the way in which the greater part of them spend their time; about the worldly affairs in which they are most frequently busied; about the part which many of them take in political matters, and especially in elections: I confine myself, solely to my text; and I say, that he who takes charge of a flock, and does not remain with that flock, subjects himself to the *woes* there denounced against the unfaithful shepherd.

But, there is, besides the injunctions of Scripture, a positive promise, which the parsons make to *God*, at the time of their *ordination*. "They profess, that they are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon them this office and administration, to serve God for the *promoting of his glory and the edifying of his people*." They declare also at their ordination, "that they are determined with the Scriptures to *instruct the people that shall be committed to their charge*; they promise that they will give their *faithful diligence always so to minister the doctrine and sacraments and the discipline of Christ*, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this realm hath received the same according to the commandment of God; that they will *teach the people committed to their cure* and charge with all diligence to keep and observe the same, that they *will be ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word*; and to use *public and private admonitions and exhortations*, as well to the *sick as to the whole, within their cures*, as need.

shall require and occasion be given ; that they will be diligent in the prayers and in the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same, *laying aside the study of the world* and the flesh ; that they will be diligent to frame and fashion themselves and their families according to the doctrine of Christ, that they may be *wholesome examples and spectacles to the flock of Christ* ; and that they will maintain and set forwards quietness, peace and love among all Christians, but, *specially among them that are or shall be committed to their charge.*" And they most solemnly ratify and confirm these declarations and promise *by receiving the holy communion.*

Now, how are they to do these things, or, indeed, any part of these things, unless they *be at the places* where they have so solemnly promised to do them ? How are they to promote God's glory and edify his people ; how are they to instruct the people *committed to their charge* ; how are they to explain the word to the people of their cure ; how are they to be ready with *faithful diligence* to banish and *drive away* all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God's word, and especially from amongst them that are committed to their charge : how are they to fulfil any of these solemn promises, if they *absent themselves* from the very spot where the people committed to their charge reside ? And, if, having already one living, they grasp at another or two, how do they obey the injunction of the apostle, to avoid *filthy lucre* ; how do they obey Christ, who bids them *freely give* ; how do they fulfil their own promise, made at the altar and with such awful solemnity, to *lay aside the study of the world*, and how do they show themselves followers of the Apostle, who bids them " be subject one to another,

and be *clothed with humility*, seeing that God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble?"

That this possessing of two or more, benefices by one parson is common in England and Ireland is notorious; though the full extent of it we are unable, without great labour, exactly to ascertain. And, as to *non-residence*, as to absence from the flocks, what do we need more than this; that, in 1799, a gentleman laid informations, according to law, against great numbers of parsons for absence from their flocks, and, of course, sued for the *penalties* in which he was to share. Now, would not one naturally suppose, that the clergy in general would have been glad of this? The fact, however, is, that they obtained a law to be passed first to *suspend*, then to *quash*, these legal proceedings: and, finally, an act was passed, which set aside, as to its most important provisions, that very act of Henry the Eighth, by which, in great measure, this Establishment was founded? Since that act, who is there that has thought it worth his while to say anything at all upon the subject? And yet this "Society for promoting Christian Knowledge" would have us look upon tithes, in their *present* shape, amount, and application, to have been, "by our *pious* ancestors, dedicated to God!"

In Ireland the case is, if possible, still worse, and it is in that country the cause of still greater scandal as well as irritation, because there the great body of the people have, in spite of all that has been done to make them change, still adhered to the faith and worship of their and our "pious ancestors," who, in dedicating tithes to the Catholic Church, did, as the Society tells us, "dedicate them to God." In that now unhappy country, the tithes are gathered, in numerous cases, for the benefit of a clergy

that are not only non-resident, but that *protest* against the faith and worship of a very great part of those from whom the tithes are taken! Was this the intention of "our pious ancestors?" Was it the intention even of the acts of Henry the Eighth?

To conclude, (for, surely, more than enough has been said,) as we see that the parsons so solemnly promise, at their ordination, to "be ready with faithful diligence to *banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine*," and as it is a fact so notorious, that a very great part of them do not reside at all either amongst, or near, the people committed to their charge, is it not a rational and fair conclusion, that, if the land be inundated by *infidelity*, this sorrowful effect may possibly be ascribable to the want of a full performance of the duties of the parsons? To deny this; to say at any rate, that this cannot be, would be to deny the utility of the priesthood altogether. Besides (and this is the *great point* of all,) if the flock, who have also the Scriptures before them; if they see, that the parson acts as if he wholly disregarded the commands and denunciations therein contained; if they see, that he is so far from watching over the fold, that he never sees it; if they know that he feeds not the flock, while he eats the fat and clothes himself with the wool; if they see filthy lucre in all his acts; if they see, that he heals not the sick, binds not the broken, brings not back the driven away, seeks not the lost, but rules the whole with force and cruelty, setting himself up as a lord over them, instead of being an example to the flock in humility; if they see in him a shepherd described by the prophet Zechariah, (chap. xi. ver. 17.) will they not, with the prophet, exclaim, "*Woe to the idle shepherd that leaveth the flock!*" And, if they see him, laying by the

word and resorting to the employment of temporal power, will they not proceed, in the words of the prophet, to complete the picture : "the sword shall be upon his right arm and upon his right eye, and his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be darkened?"

A great judge of the workings of the human heart says to the poet : "to make me weep you *must weep yourself*." And, assuredly, to make men believe, you must *act as if you yourself believed*. This is the great and constant subject of the many and impressive injunctions of the apostles to the disciples and elders. It was suggested by a knowledge of the universal practice, habits and feelings of mankind, which tells us, that, when we have duties to inculcate, a single example is worth a thousand precepts. To make men believe that the tempting bowl is poisoned, you must, at the least, abstain from the drinking of it yourself. Belief is an act of the mind, to be produced by persuasion, and not by force ; by leading and not by driving. If those, who teach, lead the way, prove their faith by their works, make religion captivating by their example, be faithful shepherds, feed the flock, then will there be no need of lawyers, juries and judges ; but, if they do, and be, none of these ; if they feed not the flock, but eat the fat and clothe themselves with the wool ; if they set at nought and bring scandal upon all the precepts and upon all the examples of those of whom they profess to be the followers, if, in a word, they prove by their lives, that they themselves do not believe that which they would punish others for not believing, lawyers will plead, juries convict, and judges condemn, in vain.

## GOOD FRIDAY;

OR,

### THE MURDER OF JESUS CHRIST BY THE JEWS.

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"Now, son of man, wilt thou judge the bloody city? Then say thou, Thus saith the Lord God: The city sheddeth blood in the midst of it: therefore have I made it a reproach to all the heathen, and a mocking to all countries. Those that be near thee, and those that be far from thee, shall mock thee, which art infamous. In thee have they dealt by oppression with the stranger, and have vexed the fatherless and the widow. Behold, the princes of Israel, every one were in thee to their power to shed blood. In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood: thou hast taken usury and increase, and hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion: behold therefore, I have smitten my hand at thy dishonest gain, and at thy blood, which has been in the midst of thee; and I will scatter thee among the heathen, and disperse thee in the countries; and thou shalt take thine inheritance in thyself in the sight of the nation."—EZEKIEL, chap. xxii. ver. 2 to 15.

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OF all the days set apart by CHRISTIANS, to be observed with special marks of solemnity, this has ever been distinguished from the rest as meriting more than ordinary proofs of their gratitude towards God; this being the anniversary of that day on which the blasphemous inhabitants of the "bloody city" put the Author of Christianity to the most cruel of deaths. On this day, therefore, we are called upon to show this gratitude not so much by the putting on of mourning, by the desisting from worldly occupations, or by any other outward signs of woe, as by reflecting, and communicating to each other our reflection, on the transactions of the day; on their effects with regard to ourselves; on the

obligations which those effects impose upon us; and on the awful consequences of our disregarding those obligations.

As to the transactions of the day, they consisted of a savage murder, committed after long premeditation; effected by hypocrisy, and bribery and perjury; accompanied with scorn and mockery of the innocent sufferer; and proceeding from motives the basest and blackest that ever disgraced the hearts of even that reprobate people whom God, by the mouths of the prophets, has appropriately denominated "*filth, and dross, and scum,*" and whom he has doomed, as in the words of my text, to be "*dispersed in the countries,*" and to have *no inheritance* except in their own bodies, on which also he has set his mark of reprobation, making them "*a mocking to all countries.*"

The life of JESUS CHRIST had been one of unmixed goodness; of spotless innocence; of bright example. He went about healing the sick, comforting the afflicted, preaching patience, forgiveness of injuries, disinterestedness, charity, peace on earth, and good will amongst men; but, above all things, an abstaining from *extortion*, an abstaining from oppression of the poor, the fatherless, and the widow. But, alas! this was the very thing which gave offence to a people who were living in all the filthiness of "*usury and increase,*" and who, though themselves the slaves of a Roman despot, who had absolute power over their purses, seem to have had no passion other than that for accumulating money; a passion which has come down, unimpaired, to their descendants, who, while they have been "*a mocking to all countries,*" have been, at the same time, a scourge to every country that has had the weakness and the wickedness to

encourage any thing approaching towards *fellowship* with this scattered and wandering and greedy race.

The offence of OUR SAVIOUR was, not his proclaiming himself *the King of the Jews*, as was falsely alleged, but his going into the TEMPLE, and overturning the tables of the *money-changers*, saying, "It is written, My house shall be a house of prayer, but you have made it a *den of thieves*." This was his real offence, in the eyes of this people, whom God had, by the prophets, denounced, on account of their crafty and merciless extortions and oppressions. "Thou hast taken usury and increase, and hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion." (Ezekiel, chap. xxii. v. 12.) This was his offence in the eyes of the Jews, who when they heard him (Luke, chap. vi. v. 35) give the precept, "*Lend, hoping for nothing thereby*;"—that is, for no *gain* on the loan; when they heard him preach doctrine like this, they instantly began to conspire against his life. For what offence could they take at his calling himself *their king*, even if he had done that? Their country was conquered; they were the slaves of a deputy despot from Rome; they had no notions of allegiance, of independence, of civil or political rights; they were, as the prophets had so clearly foretold they would be, "trampled on by the heathen," and were "the captives of the ungodly." They were a mass of contented slaves of those who worshipped JUPITER and MARS. They cared nothing about who was their king, who gave them laws, or to whom they paid tribute, so that they were but permitted to carry on their nefarious practices of usury and extortion; and it is truly surprising how closely this character has adhered to them to the present day, there not being

one single instance on record in which they have not, when the occasion offered, been the willing instruments of oppressors and tyrants, if those oppressors and tyrants gave free scope to their extortions.

Therefore, the offence committed against them by JESUS CHRIST, was his reprobating their extortions; for this they plotted against his life, and for this they finally effected his death, by means of a series of atrocities, the least of which would, in the words of the prophet, have made them everlastingly "infamous." They resorted to the means never made use of but by the basest and most cruel of tyrants: first, they *bribed* one of his followers to *betray* him into their hands; next, they got the aid of the despot and his soldiers; next, having brought him before the judge, they brought, by means of bribes, perjured witnesses to swear against him; having procured his condemnation, in spite of the judge's conviction of his innocence, and evidently, therefore, by bribery here also, they put him to the death, at once the most cruel and most degrading. Having obtained the sanction of the base and corrupt heathen judge, who, while he called him "*a just person*," and declared that he "*found no fault in him*," and "*washed his hands*" of the murder, scourged him, and gave him up to be murdered; having obtained the sanction of this bribed and unfeeling hypocrite, and having the swords and pikes of hardened soldiers to protect them against the interference of the just and humane part of the people; thus sanctioned and thus protected, the malignant and cowardly persecutors, not content with inflicting death, accompanied the infliction with every addition that innate, inveterate, and hellish cruelty could suggest. They put, in

mockery, a crown of thorns upon his head, a royal robe over his shoulders, and a reed for a sceptre in his hand; they buffeted him, spat upon him, jibed and reviled him; and having exhausted their ingenuity in the infliction of indignities, and in cannibal-like exultations over the meek, patient, unoffending, and unresisting victim of their malice, they dragged him without the city, and fixed him on the cross by nails driven through his hands and his feet, there to suffer, amidst their still-continued mockery and scoffing, all the pains and anguish of the most cruel death; and, as if all this were not sufficient, they nailed up *two thieves*, one on his right hand, one on his left, in order that by implication and inference, his memory might rank along with that of the most infamous malefactors.

Such were the transactions of the day which we are now assembled to commemorate. Every human being must feel it to be a duty to speak of those transactions with abhorrence; but I am here addressing myself to CHRISTIANS; to all those of my countrymen, who, under whatever denomination, profess to be of the religion of JESUS CHRIST. All these profess to believe, that their salvation will be owing to the merits of Jesus Christ, whom, therefore, we emphatically call "OUR SAVIOUR." They believe that he suffered death in order that they might have eternal life. DEISTS deny this; and yet affect to believe in a *future state of life*. They shudder at the thought of *annihilation*; they cannot endure the idea of becoming so many *clods of earth*; and yet, if not in the GOSPEL of CHRIST, where do they find *any ground for believing*, that to become a senseless clod is not the doom of man?

However, I am not speaking to unbelievers, but to professors of CHRISTIANITY, whose belief is,

that no one can be saved on his own merits ; that all must be saved, if saved they be, on account of the merits of JESUS CHRIST ; that the atonement for them was made by him ; that it is their duty to obey his precepts to the utmost of their power ; and that, above all things, it is their duty to be grateful to him for the sufferings which, for their sakes, he endured on the day of which this is the anniversary.

But the obligations which are imposed on us by the transactions of this memorable and awful day, are not confined to cold and formal expressions of gratitude, to mere outward ceremony, to the mere use of voice and gesture, or the putting on of particular garbs : a mourning coat or cloak may cover a body containing a soul as far from being a *Christian*, as those of the *Jews* themselves, even while they are in the performance of their blasphemous rites, and defending, by fair implication, the bloody deed, for which their race has been condemned to wander throughout the earth.

No : we are called upon to show our gratitude by our acts, to prove the sincerity of our belief, not by words but by deeds. “ It is not he that crieth, *Lord ! Lord !* but he that *doeth my will*, that is *my disciple*.” And, what is his *will* ? Why, that we should not only abstain from doing evil, not only do no injustice, commit no act of extortion, commit no crime of any sort, but do as much good as we are able to do ; to endeavour to make our country happy, to repress injustice when in our power ; to defend feeble innocence against powerful guilt ; to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, harbour the harbourless, visit the sick, lift up the humble and unjustly depressed, and pull down, if we have the power, haughtiness and insolence, and

oppressive influence of every description. Vain is the imagination of those who believe, or, at least, whose conduct would seem to say that they believe, that they please God by their melancholy tone and air, and by being in incessant misery. Man was not made to live a life of wretchedness. If this were so, the infliction of tyranny, stripes, extortion, starvation, would be to be commended; and justice, mercy, and charity, would be subjects for reprobation. No: it is not a mournful and lazy despondency that bespeaks the CHRISTIAN; but a cheerful and active and vigilant discharge of all the duties stated and enjoined in the Gospel of JESUS CHRIST. And the transactions of *this day* in particular ought to revive in us, if we stand in need of such revival, a sense of our duty to encounter any hardships, and to make any sacrifices, that justice and mercy and charity may call on us to encounter and to make; for, what were the hardships for us endured, what was the sacrifice for us made on this ever-memorable day!

But there is *one duty*, which, above all others, is suggested and enjoined by the recollection of the transactions of this day; there is *one obligation*, a disregard of which would be to set at defiance, not only the law of God, but every moral precept and principle known amongst men, and must mark us out as lost to every feeling, not only of gratitude, but of common shame, and of common humanity: and this great and sound obligation is, *that we do nothing that can by possibility be interpreted to mean, that we do not abhor the conduct of those who crucified HIM, on whom we rely for salvation.* It is not enough that we express, in words, our abhorrence of the murder and the murderers; we must, by our deeds, whenever the occasion offer, prove the *sin-*

*cerity* of this abhorrence. The actual perpetrators of the bloody deed have, to be sure, long ceased to exist; but, if the earth be still polluted by their descendants in mind and heart as well as in their natural bodies; and if these still persevere in the utterance of their blasphemous calumnies; if they persevere in giving the lie to the prophets and evangelists, can those be *Christians* who join in *fellowship* with them? Nay, who do not do their utmost, as far as is consistent with justice and humanity, to prevent these descendants of the murderers of CHRIST from possessing the means of doing mischief in the world?

This is a momentous question, dividing itself into two parts: first, as relating to RELIGION; and, next, as relating to TEMPORAL GOOD: and, let us now view the matter in these two distinct lights.

With regard to the first, the case stands thus: This is a *Christian nation*; Christians believe, that Christ was the son of God; that he died to save them from perdition; that, without this sacrifice, they could not have been saved. This is the *Christian belief*; and we believe, further, that he rose from the dead; and that he now sitteth on the right hand of God. And, what say the Jews? They assert, that he was an IMPOSTOR; that he *deserved* the cruel death that was inflicted on him; that he did *not rise from the dead*; and that our faith and hope rest on a contemptible fable. For eighteen hundred years they have been asserting this; and, during that time, the Gospel has spread over nearly the whole earth, while they have been dispersed over that earth, agreeably to the words of the prophets, over and over again repeated. The whole of their conduct and fate was foretold by the prophets; the bribe which they gave to Judas;

their mockery of JESUS; their hardness of heart; their shedding of innocent blood; and, the strongest of all the proofs of the truth of our religion is to be found in the clear and repeated prophecies, that they should be dispersed amongst the nations, should be wanderers over the earth, and should have *no inheritance*, except the possession of *their own bodies*, or, as the prophet EZEKIEL describes it, the monopoly of their own "*filthiness*;" that is to say, that they should, in no country on earth, (as long as they adhered to their blasphemy,) have any immunities, any privileges, any possessions in house, land, or water, any civil or political rights; that they should, every where be deemed *aliens*; and always at the *absolute disposal of the sovereign power of the state*, as completely as any inanimate substance, thrown on the land by the wind or the waves.

This was the judgment passed on them by God himself, and on them this judgment has been executed. Sometimes, indeed, careless, foolish, profligate, and, above all, *oppressive* rulers of Christian nations, have, from some motive connected with the aptness and power of those blasphemers to aid them in their oppressions; in some few instances, and from such motives, a relaxation of their doom has taken place; and in one or two instances, the basest of tyrants have bestowed titles of "*honour*" upon them, as a reward for assistance given by them in oppressing and plundering their unhappy subjects; but these are mere exceptions to the universal rule; while the nations of the earth, with undivided voice, and for the unbroken period of eighteen hundred years, have proclaimed the truth of the holy prophets, and the just judgments of God evinced in the doom of these perverse blasphemers of his name.

And wherever such relaxation has taken place, the punishment of both rulers and people has speedily followed. The harvest has not been tardy, when the seed has once been sown. Deism, atheism, all restraints from religious consideration, have immediately followed: the "*goddess of reason*" in some cases, and "*death's eternal sleep*" in others; these, with all their accompanying enormities, and all their rivers of blood; these, or something nearly resembling them, have been invariably, as they were naturally, the fruit of every attempt thus to thwart the decree of God by human means. To be sure, it must of necessity be thus: for to do any act which puts a Jew, in point of *cre-dence* and *confidence* and *honour* and *power*, upon a level with Christians, what is it but to declare that he who proclaims JESUS CHRIST to have been an *impostor* is as good a man, and as worthy of belief, confidence, and trust, as a man who adores JESUS CHRIST? And what is this but to declare, that to adore JESUS CHRIST is of *no use*? And what is this but to declare, that the *doctrines of Christianity are false*?

That Christian *teachers* should, above all men living, have been remiss in warning rulers against relaxations of this pernicious description, is an instance of abandonment of duty, and, in fact, of apostasy, not to be thought possible, if, unhappily, the fact were not but too well known. For why do we have *teachers* of Christianity; why "preach JESUS CHRIST crucified;" why, above all things, call men "*reverend*," and give them money for *teaching a belief* in CHRIST as the Son of God; why honour and *pay* men for doing this; why call them your *pastors*; why have them for any such purpose, if the man who declares CHRIST to have

been an IMPOSTOR, worthy of an ignominious death; if such a man be as worthy of credence and trust and magisterial and all other authority, as a man who worships CHRIST as his SAVIOUR? To be consistent and decent such *teachers* ought, at any rate, to resign their offices, and forego their gains; for, of all the instances which the world has produced of audacious profligacy, who ever witnessed one equal to that of declaring a *Jew blasphemous to be as good as a Christian*, and, at the same time, demand *money* for teaching the *Christian faith*! But the truth is that these are not *Christian teachers*: they are those *wolves in sheep's clothing*, foretold by CHRIST himself; and, as was JUDAS ISCARIOT, so are they: he betrayed his master for thirty pieces of silver; *their price* may have been somewhat higher, but their acts and their motives are the same; and let us leave it to God to unite them in their fate.

With regard to the TEMPORAL GOOD of a nation, what can be more pernicious than to give countenance and encouragement to a race, whose god is *gain*; who live solely by money-changing; who never labour in making, or causing to come, anything useful to man; who are usurers by profession, and extortioners by habit and almost by instinct; who, to use the words of the prophet, carry on "usury and increase, and greedily gain of their neighbours by extortion?" This propensity they appear to have in their very nature; it seems to be imborn with them to be continually drawing to themselves the goods of all around them. In all the states, where they have been encouraged, they have first assisted to rob and enslave the people, and, in the end, to destroy the government. A neighbouring nation, which was, at last, plunged into all the horrors of

anarchy, they were the agents in bringing into that state of misery, which finally produced the lamentable catastrophe. They everywhere are on the side of oppression, assisting tyranny in its fiscal extortions; and everywhere they are the bitter foes of those popular rights and liberties, which are not more necessary to the happiness of the people than to the stability and dignity of the sovereign power; because, as long as those rights are in force, there is no room for a full display of their talent at accumulation: it is amongst masses of debt and misery that they thrive, as birds and beasts of prey get fat in time of pestilence. St. GREGORY calls usury, even in private cases, "*felony and parricide*;" what must it be, then, when it spreads its deadly wings over the property of a whole nation?

This race appears always to have been the instruments in the hands of tyrants for plundering their subjects; they were the *farmers of the cruel taxes*, in the reigns of Louis XIV, and Louis XV.; and naturally, and, indeed, necessarily, the enemies of all Christians; they lend a support to despotism, which it could not otherwise obtain; and we see, accordingly, that the wisest and bravest and most just and humane of the kings of England, and in the times of England's greatest happiness and renown, have invariably treated this race of blasphemers and usurers with the greatest rigour, merely permitting their existence here during the pleasure of the sovereign. In POLAND, HUNGARY, and divers parts of Germany, they have, at times, until *banished*, (as they frequently have been,) totally ruined a great part of the people. In some of the territories on the Rhine, the main part of the people are, in fact, their slaves. In KENTUCKY, one of the states of America, a band of Jews had not

long ago, amassed so large a part of the property of the state, that the people rose upon them in a body, and drove them out of the territory.

A great historian has remarked, that this race always becomes of importance in a country, that it always becomes numerous and thriving, in proportion as the country is on the decline and in a state of distress, just as vermin increase and thrive on the body of a diseased animal; and that, as to more modern times, "it would have been impossible to carry on fiscal oppressions to the extent that we have beheld, without the aid of these people," who, with their loans, their usury, and their various contrivances, assist mainly in drawing the substance from the people, which they share with their protector; on whose side, therefore, they always are. No question that the murderers of CHRIST were sharers, in some way or other, in the *tribute* paid to the Romans. "Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might *entangle* him in his talk. And they sent unto him their disciples, with the *Herodians* (Herod's people,) saying, Master, we know that thou art *true*, and teachest the way of God *in truth*, neither *carest thou for any man*; for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us, *therefore*, what thinkest thou? Is it *lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or not*? But JESUS perceived their *wickedness*, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye *hypocrites*? Show me the tribute money. And they brought him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they say unto him, Cæsar's. Then said he unto them, Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." So that these wretches, who had been conquered by the Romans, and who were paying tribute to the

conquerors, had the infamy to go *along with* HEROD'S *people*, to endeavour to obtain evidence against him, and to put him in the power of that very man that was exacting the tribute from their unhappy countrymen! How exactly like those *spies* whom tyrants employ when they suspect that their power is in danger, and who, in the words of the Psalmist, "lie in wait to shed innocent blood." These Jews took the Herodians with them! 'This is so like the practice of the *spies of tyrants*: they had Herod's soldiers ready to pounce upon him! Beyond all doubt they were sharers in the tribute; and in all human probability had betrayed their own countrymen into the hands of the conquerors: verifying therein the words of the prophet, that they should barter their freedom "for bits of silver."

The propensity to *bribe* and *corrupt*, so notorious in this people, as described and denounced by the prophets, and as evinced in the case of ISCARIOT, ought *never to be lost sight of*! Notwithstanding the example made of Samuel's sons; and notwithstanding the denunciation that "fire shall consume the habitations of *bribery*," we find the prophet AMOS accusing them of horrible bribery, and foretelling their chastisement accordingly. "Forasmuch, therefore, as your treading is upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat; ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine in them. For I know your manifold transgression and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they *take a bribe*, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right." (AMOS, chap. v. ver. 11.) Again, in the next chapter, ver. 4, "Ye swallow up the needy, making the poor of the land to fail; ye make the *ephah small* and the *shekel great*,

falsifying the balances by deceit, that ye may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes."

Oh! how justly descriptive of their character and conduct! What, then, shall we, disregarding the united voice of the prophets, though confirmed to the very letter by all subsequent history and by our own sad experience; shall we, disregarding all these, pass this memorable day over without bearing testimony against all those, who, whether by acts of commission or omission, would imply that this race, thus denounced by God for their outrageous wickedness, for their bribery, their corruption, their subornation of perjury, their usury, their deceit, their frauds, their oppressions of the poor, their murders and their blasphemies without end; shall we pass over this memorable day without protesting against those who imply that this race, who, to crown all their other abominations, revile **JESUS CHRIST** as an impostor, are as *good*, as *worthy* of credence, and trust and honour as Christians!

Do I call upon you to destroy them or to hunt them from the land like beasts of prey? By no means: the principles of Christians, the principles of Him against whom they utter their blasphemies, are their sure protection. But, to abstain from punishment, and to give encouragement, are two things widely different; by the former, we leave the blasphemers to repent; by the latter, we (attempt how we may to gloss the matter over) join in the blasphemy. And if we, no matter by what means, however distant and indirect, declare that those who call **CHRIST** an *impostor*, are as good as those who adore him, we ourselves partake in their crime. For, "can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burnt: can one go upon hot

coals, and his feet not be burnt?" (Proverbs, chap. vi. ver. 27 and 28.)

By that modern "*liberality*" which means an abandonment of all principle and a supplying of its place with folly and hypocrisy duly admixed; by the professors of this new and curious school, I shall be asked, Whether the Jews had not "*the same Maker with us*;" this being the standing question of this school. Yes, surely, God made the Jews; and so he did the serpent and the crocodile; yet he teaches other animals to shun serpents and crocodiles. God made the hawk, the kite, and the screech-owl; yet he has taught other birds to flee from them. God made the arrow that flieth by day, and the pestilence that flieth by night; yet he has taught us to endeavour to escape from both. Oh, yes! God made the Jews; and so he did Ahab and Nero and Caligula and Judas Iscariot and Henry the Eighth and Jezebel and "Good Queen Bess." God made the cannibals and the men of Sodom and Gomorrah; and lastly, God made *Satan himself*, who, though he tempted the Son of God, did not murder him. And, what does this eternal enemy of God and man do now? What can he do worse, than instil into the minds of men, that Jesus Christ was an *impostor*, and that the Gospel is a fraudulent lie? Come, then, "*liberality!*" Away with all squeamishness; open widely thy indiscriminating arms, and hug to thy bosom the devil himself!

Ah! let us not deceive ourselves by these hypocritical excuses! If we make a compromise with the blasphemer, in order to ensure to ourselves a share in his wealth, or in order to slaken his voracious grasp, or from any motive of expediency, either private or public; if we, thus, acting under the

garb of "liberality," make fellowship with those who call CHRIST an *impostor*, we may deceive ourselves, but we cannot deceive God, who has forbidden us to "be yoked together with unbelievers; for, what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness; and what communion hath light with darkness; and what concord hath Christ with Belial; or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? Therefore, come out from among them, and *be separate* from them, saith the Lord." Attempt to disguise the matter in whatever manner we may, plaster it over with "liberality" and "toleration" as thickly as we please, if we, under whatever colour or name, and in any way however circumlocutious, do any act, or approve of any act, expressly or tacitly, by which it shall be declared, though only by implication, that he who calls CHRIST an *impostor* is as good as he who worships him, we fall under the awful denunciation pronounced against those, who, "to themselves," that is, as far as they are able, "*crucify the Son of God afresh*, and put him to an open shame." Come, then, professor of Christianity! Look at HIM now, as on *this very day*, stretched on the cross; behold the thorns around his brow; see the blood stream down from his hands and his feet; witness his agony and hear his dying groan; see the heavens darkened, hear the avenging tempest roar, and see the temple rent in twain; and then take the Jews to your bosom; and then, if you can, call yourself "a *follower of Christ*," and expect salvation from his atoning blood!

TO THE WORKING PEOPLE:

ON THE

NEW DEAD-BODY BILL.

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. Stockport, in Cheshire, 24th Jan. 1832.

MY FRIENDS,

THE above subject is very interesting to you, and I beg you to give it your particular attention. You have been informed of the horrible murders in London, committed by the bloody BISHOP and others; and I will now explain to you *the cause* of those murders. When you clearly see this cause, you will know how *you* ought to think and *feel* upon this subject.

There are in London and some other great towns, places where men are *engaged in cutting up dead human bodies*. What they do this *for*; that is to say, under what *pretence* they do this, I will speak by-and-by; at present I have only to speak of the fact, and to show you that it is *the cause* of the *horrible murders* that you have lately read of. The cutters-up of human bodies, or *body-cutters*, *purchase* dead bodies to cut up, and with just as little scruple and ceremony as *cutting-butchers* purchase the dead bodies of pigs or sheep from the *carcass-butchers*. The law, as it now stands, makes it only a *misdemeanor*, that is to say, a crime punishable by

*fine and imprisonment, as a common assault is, or as a libel is, to steal, to sell, or to purchase, a dead human body; and I pray you mark, that to steal the dead body of a sheep, or pig, or calf, or ox, or fowl of any sort, is a capital felony, punished with DEATH; and that to receive any such body, or to have it in your possession, knowing it to be stolen, is also a felony, punished with TRANSPORTATION.* This law extends to all sorts of moveable property; and a bookseller named CAHUACK (or some such name) *was transported*, some few years ago, for *purchasing* and having in his possession some *copies of a book* which had been stolen out of the ware-house of Mr. BENSLEY, in Bolt-court. This bookseller had a family, carried on a respectable business, and bore a fair character; and he alleged that *he did not know* the books to have been stolen. From the circumstances, however, the jury were satisfied that *he did know* them to have been stolen; and he was transported; and very justly transported; for he was as criminal as the thief himself.

But, my friends, if it be *just* (and it is so) to punish with transportation a man who receives the dead body of a *pig*, knowing it to be stolen, *what are we to say* to the law which punishes *so slightly*, and, in practice, *punishes not at all*, he who receives and cuts up the dead body of one of the people, though he **MUST KNOW** that it has been *stolen*, if not *murdered*? What are we to say of *such a law*? And while the law stands thus, what is the *protection* that the labouring people receive from the law?

On the 12th of December last, the following letter was published in all the London newspapers. I beg you to read it with attention.

"SIR,—Having dined yesterday with some of my brother magistrates, I learned, upon information which I have no reason to distrust, that besides the confessions published, another was made on Sunday last, which comprehended a *catalogue of about sixty murders*, and would have probably gone on to a much greater extent, but for the interference of the ordinary. When to this is added the large supply which by the published confessions, Bishop appears to have furnished for dissection, the great number of persons employed in the same way, the probable profligacy of such persons, and, as asserted, *a great falling off in the number of burials*, notwithstanding the increased population of this metropolis, there is certainly but too much reason to believe that this *system of murder amongst the poor*, which Bishop said he resorted to as both *less expensive and less hazardous* than collecting from cemeteries, is become *extremely common*, that it is in a *state of progression*, and that *new and extraordinary modes*, however inconvenient to the professor and students of anatomy, **MUST BE HAD RECOURSE TO, FOR THE PREVENTION OF SUCH ATROCIOUS CRIMES.**

"J. SEWELL.

"21, Cumberland-street,  
Portman-square, Dec. 8."

This Mr. SEWELL is a *police magistrate*, and, besides this, his statement is *notoriously true*. Thus, then, *sixty poor persons*, at the very least, have been *murdered* in London alone. Probably *hundreds*; but *sixty at the least*. And, observe, they have all been **RECEIVED** *by the cutters-up*; and no detection of the murderers ever took place, until that of the bloody Bishop and his associates, whose conduct was so open and unwary that the *receivers* saw

that they were liable to be *implicated themselves in the crime of murder*. The apology, the impudent, the audacious excuse of the cutters-up, is, that "they *cannot* always distinguish the body of a person who has been *murdered* from that of one who has *died a natural death*." This is stated by the council of the *Royal College of Surgeons*, in their letter to Lord Melbourne of the 10th of December last; a document the most impudent and unfeeling that ever was put upon paper. Well, then, since they declare, that even they are unable to distinguish a murdered body from one that has died a natural death; and, since it is notorious that there are hundreds (ay, *hundreds!*) of cutters-up of human bodies; and that there are many places for the *receiving* and *purchasing* of human bodies, and that, too, *in open defiance of the present law*; what ought the Parliament *to have done* the moment it met, after the detection of the recent horrible murders? Why, pass a law, to be sure, making the *stealing* and the *receiving* of the dead body of a human being a crime *as great*, at the least, as the stealing and the receiving of the dead body of a *pig* or a *sheep*. This is what the Parliament ought to have done at the least. And, indeed, it ought to have done much more. The College of Surgeons allow, that even *they* are not, in all cases, able to distinguish between *murdered* bodies and bodies *stolen from the coffin*. The cutter-up and the receiver *never know* that they *are not accessories* to the commission of murder: they proceed in their bloody work, knowing that they may be such accessories. No man, nothing short of a monster, will deny that it is *as great* a crime to steal the dead body of a human being, as it is to steal the dead body of a sheep or a pig. Therefore, that crime ought to be

punished *with death* as is the crime of stealing the dead body of a pig or sheep; and *death* ought also to be the punishment of the *receiver* and the *cutter-up*; because they can, according to their own confession, never know that they are not wilfully and premeditatedly engaged in an act which makes them accessories to the commission of murder, both before and after the fact. In short, an act ought to have been passed, the moment the Parliament met, to punish *as murderers*, all those who should, in future, be found to have *in their possession* any human body, or part of any human body, not delivered up to them *in consequence of a sentence in a court of justice*.

This is what the Parliament *ought to have done*. And what *have they done*? Why, one WARBURTON has brought in a bill, which is now before the House of Commons. I have not seen this bill; but the following has been published *as an abstract of it*; and this abstract is *quite enough for me*. I will first insert it, and then remark upon it.

### SCHOOLS OF ANATOMY.

The preamble of this bill states, that whereas a knowledge of the causes and nature of very many diseases which affect the body, and of the best methods of treating and curing such diseases, and of healing and repairing divers wounds and injuries, to which the human frame is liable, *cannot be acquired but by anatomical examination*; and whereas, therefore, it is *highly expedient to give protection*, under certain regulations, to the study and practice of anatomy:—

Clause I. therefore enacts the Secretary of State to appoint Inspectors of Schools of Anatomy.

II. Name of Inspector, and District to which he belongs, to be published in the *London Gazette*.

III. One inspector to reside in London, and one other in Edinburgh.

IV. Inspectors to receive returns and certificates.

V. To visit any place where anatomy is carried on.

VI. *Salaries to Inspectors.*

VII. Executors may permit bodies to undergo anatomical examination in certain cases.

VIII. The same not to be removed from the place where such person may have died, without a certificate.

IX. Professors, surgeons, and others, may receive bodies for anatomical examination.

X. Such person to receive with the body a certificate, as aforesaid.

XI. Persons described in this Act *not to be liable to punishment for having in their possession human bodies, nor for any offence against this Act, unless the prosecution is instituted by the Attorney-General.*

XII. This Act not to prohibit *post-mortem* examination.

XIII. So much of 9 Geo. IV., c. 31, as directs that the bodies of murderers may be dissected *is repealed.*

XIV. Bodies of murderers to be *buried in the highway, or hung in chains.*

XV. This act not to extend to Ireland.—[*And why not ?*]

Pray look well at clauses 9 and 11; especially at clause 11; and observe, that nobody is to prosecute but the *Attorney-General*! Pray mark that. **THIS SAME WARBURTON** brought in a bill, in 1829, to authorize *masters of workhouses, overseers of the poor, keepers of hospitals, and keepers of prisons, to dispose of (and, of course, to sell) the*

bodies of all persons dying under their keeping, or power, unless such bodies were *claimed by relations*; and, even then, such relations were *not to have* the bodies, unless they could *give security for the burial of them according to the rites of the church*. Thus were the very *poorest of the poor* to have their bodies sold to be cut up! Thus were the Parliament to fulfil the command of God, and to show their belief in his word. "Despise not the poor *because he is poor*," says the Bible. What would this law have said? Why, "*cut him up because he is poor*?"

This bill *passed the House of Commons*; and was carried to THE LORDS, who, to their great honour, *rejected it*. When it went to the Lords, I petitioned against it. I gave my petition to the *Bishop of London*, who presented it on the 26th May, 1829. Now, my friends, read this petition *attentively*. It states your case. It puts forward *your claim to protection* against the cutters-up and the grave-robbers and the murderers.

*To the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled.*

The petition of William Cobbett, of Kensington,  
Most humbly sheweth,

That a bill has just passed the Commons' House of Parliament, which bill gives authority to overseers, or other persons who have the charge of poor-houses and hospitals, to dispose of (and, of course, *to sell*) the dead bodies of those paupers and patients who may die in workhouses and hospitals, and whose bodies are not claimed by their relations, those relations giving security that they will, at their own charge, cause the said bodies to be buried.

That your humble petitioner is quite sure that your Right Honourable House will clearly perceive that such a law is just the same thing as a law to authorize overseers and hospital-keepers to dispose of the dead bodies of *all poor persons, whatsoever*, dying under their charge; for that the bare fact of the death taking place under such circumstances, is quite enough to convince every one, that the bodies of such poor persons will, on account of the poverty of their relations, never be claimed, especially if the claim be to compel the claimant to give security for defraying the expense of an interment; and that, therefore, this is, in short, a bill to enable the agents of the rich to dispose of the dead bodies of the most unfortunate of the poor, and that, too, for the benefit of those rich.

That your humble petitioner begs to be permitted to state to your Right Honourable House, that those poor and necessitous persons, whom the law calls paupers, have a clear and undoubted *right to be relieved* out of the property of the owners and occupiers of the houses and the lands; that this law is, as stated by Blackstone, founded in the principles of civil society; that it has been confirmed by the canon law, by the writings of the Christian fathers, by the law of nations as laid down by civilians, by the common law of England, and, lastly, by the statute law of England; and that this right extends to interment after death, according to the rights and ceremonies of the established church.

That the unfortunate persons who die in poor-houses and hospitals have, in numerous cases, seen better days, and have, during many years, contributed by direct payments towards the maintenance of the poor and the sick; that those of them who have not thus contributed, have all been, as long as

able to work, compelled to pay heavy taxes out of the fruits of their hard labour; that every working man, of whatever description, pays full the one half of his wages in taxes; and that, therefore, when he becomes so poor, helpless, and destitute, as to die in a poor-house or in a hospital, it is unjust, cruel, barbarous to the last degree, to dispose of his dead body to be cut up like that of a murderer, and to let him know beforehand, too, that his body is thus to be treated, thereby adding to the pangs of death itself.

That your humble petitioner beseeches your Right Honourable House to bear in mind, that, in 1808, a Return, laid before Parliament, stated that upwards of two thousand persons, men, women, and children, belonging to noble or rich families, were receiving annually large sums of money out of the taxes in the shape of pensions and sinecures, and that none of these persons had ever rendered any service to the public for the sums thus by them received; that your petitioner does not think it probable that a less sum is on this account now paid out of the taxes than was paid in 1808; that, in like manner, large sums of money, amounting in the whole to more than a million and a half of pounds sterling, have, within these few years, been given by the Parliament for "*the relief of the poor clergy of the church of England*;" that those who are now paupers have, during their whole lives, been *paying taxes to support these poor nobles and clergy*; that they have, in fact, for the far greater part, been reduced to a state of pauperism by the taxes, and by the taxes alone; and that those bodies which have been worn out or debilitated by labours performed and privations endured for the benefit of the rich, are now, when breathless, to be sold and cut up for the benefit of those same rich.

That all nations, even the most barbarous, have shown respect for the remains of the dead; that the Holy Scriptures invariably speak of the rites of burial as being honourable, and of the refusal of those rites as an infamous punishment and signal disgrace; that in the 15th chap. of Genesis, 15th verse, it is recorded, that amongst the gracious promises that God made to ABRAHAM, on account of his faith, one was, that he should be *buried* in a good old age; that DAVID, (2 Samuel, chap. 2.,) when the men of Jabesh-gilead had *buried* Saul, blessed them for his kindness, and said the Lord would reward them; that the Psalmist, in describing the desolation of Jerusalem by the hands of the heathen, says that these latter had given the dead bodies of the Israelites to be meat unto the fowls of the heavens, that they shed their blood like water, and that there was *none to bury them*, which, he adds, has made the Israelites a reproach to the other nations; that in ECCLESIASTES, chap. 6, verse 3, it is said, that if a man have ever so prosperous and long a life, if he have *no burial* he had better never have been born; that we find by Ezekiel, chap. 39, that even enemies were to be *buried*, and that if a human bone was found above ground, it was to be deemed a duty to inter it; that the prophet ISAIAH, chap. 14, says that the King of Babylon shall be kept out of the grave, like an abominable branch, and shall *not be buried*, because he has been a tyrant; that the prophet Jeremiah, chap. 7 and 8, at the conclusion of a long and terrible denunciation against the Jews, tells them that they *shall not be gathered nor be buried*, and that they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth; that the same prophet chap. 14, says, that the people who listen to false prophets shall die of famine and the sword, and

*shall have none to bury them*; that the same prophet, chap. 16, foretelling the ruin of the Jews, says that they shall die of grievous deaths, that they shall not be lamented, *neither shall they be buried*, but shall be as dung upon the face of the earth; that the same prophet, chap. 22, pronounces judgment on JEHOIAKIM, King of Juda, for covetousness, for shedding innocent blood, for oppression and violence, that he *shall be buried with the burial of an ass*, drawn and cast forth before the gates of Jerusalem; that in the New Testament, we find that *devout* men carried STEPHEN to *his burial*; and, finally, that by our own burial service and canons we are taught, that to be buried in consecrated ground is *a right* belonging to every person who has been baptized, who is not, at the hour of death, excommunicated, and who has not killed him or herself.

That seeing that such is the language of Holy Writ, your humble petitioner has waited until now, hoping that the bill in question would be zealously and effectually opposed by the clergy of the established Church; that, if the bodies of poor persons can be disposed of and cut up into pieces, without any detriment to our faith, our hope, our religious feeling; if no burial service is at all necessary in these cases, if this be told to the people by this bill, it is manifest, that that same people will not long think that the burial service can in any case be necessary, and that they will, in a short time, look upon all other parts of the church service as equally useless; because, as your petitioner presumes, there is no ground whatever for believing in the sacredness of one rite or ceremony any more than in that of another, and that, of course, if the Burial of the dead can be dispensed with, so may Baptism, Con-

firmation, Marriage, and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

That your humble petitioner is firmly persuaded, that a belief in the resurrection, and in a future state of rewards and punishments, cannot exist for any length of time in a country where human bodies are by law permitted to be disposed of, and that, too, for the avowed purpose of being cut to pieces for the use of the parties acquiring them; and that, therefore, atheism, generally prevalent throughout the country, must be one of the natural consequences of this bill, if, unhappily, it become a law.

That your humble petitioner hopes that your Right Honourable House will perceive, that if this bill were to become a law, the hatred of the rich by the poor must become implacable and universal, while the latter would be taught by this bill atheism, and obduracy of heart, and familiarity with ferocious ideas and bloody deeds; and that it would require greater powers of persuasion than even eloquent men generally possess, to convince the poor that they ought to be restrained by any thing but want of power, while the same Government which takes from them a large part of their earnings for the support of the rich, condemns their bodies to be disposed of after death, for the benefit of those same rich.

That, for these reasons, your humble petitioner prays, that your Right Honourable House will not pass the bill afore-mentioned, but will protect the poor against a species of oppression more odious as well as more cruel and more hostile to feelings of humanity than any ever before heard of in the world.

And your petitioner will ever pray.

WM. COBBETT.

*London, 22d May, 1829.*

Now, my friends, the present bill differs from the former one, in some respects ; but its main tendency is the same. What it will be at last, we cannot as yet precisely say ; but, in the meanwhile, look at the following report of a debate, which took place in the House of Commons on the 17th instant.

Mr. WARBURTON moved the second reading of the bill for providing subjects for the anatomical schools. The honourable member, who spoke in a low tone, was understood to say, that as the bill had been twice before the House, which has assented to its principles on former occasions, he thought any explanation unnecessary.

Sir ROBERT INGLIS did not think it sufficient that this bill had been twice before the House formerly, to induce the House to pass it. He required further explanation. He was glad to observe that in the present bill there was a distinct enactment separating the dissection from the crime of murder ; he was satisfied that the study of anatomy was necessary for the successful practice of medicine, and that, therefore, some means must be taken to remedy the present state of the law. He had ascertained that during last year there were *only eleven bodies* which could be legally disposed of as subjects, and these were *to supply eight hundred students of medicine*. While the principles of the bill were deserving the attention of the House, so were its details. There was one of these to which he objected. *He thought the relations of persons dying in jails, workhouses, &c. should have their bodies if they chose to demand them*. He would not oppose the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. CRESSET PELHAM opposed the bill, and contended that it *merely gave a legal encouragement to the traffic in human blood*.

Mr. HUME supported the bill, and expressed his surprise that the honourable Baronet, the member for Oxford, (Sir R. Inglis,) should not perceive that the bill would *make subjects cheap*, and that its provisions were therefore the more likely to put an end to the traffic of those who *calculated on a high price* as a reward for the perpetration of crime.

Mr. PERCEVAL recommended that *the mere possession of dead bodies should be held to be a felony*. The knowledge of surgery could not be lost in the short space of two years, and if they were to try an experiment for that time, he was sure that medical men would then resort to the dissection of animals, and obtain from it when conducted under proper regulations, all the knowledge necessary for their profession.

Mr. F. POLLOCK defended the principle of the bill, and expressed his surprise to see it maintained as just that medical men were to be civilly, aye, and criminally punished for ignorance of their profession, and yet punished at the same time for *any attempt to acquire knowledge*. He was convinced that the bill would effect a most beneficial change, without in the slightest degree *wounding that sensitive feeling among the lower classes*, which he should be one of the last to wish wholly obliterated.

*The ATTORNEY-GENERAL was in favour of the bill.* It made no alteration in the punishment of those who were guilty of crime. Burking was still murder, and punishable with all the severity it deserved; but the bill took away one of the incitements to the crime, by *diminishing the expense and the risk of procuring subjects*.

Mr. WARBURTON briefly replied. The bill was intended to do *equal justice to the poor and the rich*, and it excepted only two cases from its opera-

tion. The first was when a person specially requested *that his body might not be dissected*; and the second was, when the *next of kin* was decidedly averse to the performance of the operation. Nothing could be more idle than to exclaim that *the rich were solely benefited* by the diffusion of the knowledge of anatomy. *The very contrary was the fact.* The rich employ those who had obtained, at a great cost, their knowledge of their profession abroad, while the poor were compelled to accept that kind of assistance which was within their reach, and which, if it did not include practical information on the structure of the human frame, would soon be lamentably inefficient.

From this we are to conclude, that the *bodies of the poor*, who die in *prisons, hospitals, and poor-houses*, are to be disposed of to the cutters-up. No matter on *what condition*: I care not a straw about that: here will be a law to give up the dead bodies of the poor to the hackers and cutters; and that is quite enough for me. I agree with Mr. PELHAM and Mr. PERCEVAL; and I abhor the expressions of HUME and of DENMAN about making dead bodies CHEAP! POLLOCK will find, I fancy, that it will "wound the sensitive feelings of the poor." It is curious that the *WHIG REFORMERS are for this bill*, and that the *TORIES are against it!* What sort of a reform the *Whigs* have in view we may guess from this circumstance. For my part, I am very hard to believe that those who are for this bill *mean the people any good* by the Reform Bill. I repeat here my words at Manchester; namely, that if a reformed Parliament cannot find the means of protecting the *dead bodies* of the working people, while such ample means are found for protecting the dead body of a hare, a pheasant,

or a partridge; then, indeed the Bishops did right in opposing the Reform Bill; for a greater delusion, a greater fraud, never was attempted to be practised on any part of mankind. Let me stop here to request your particular attention to this matter relating to the want of law to protect the dead bodies of the working people. You all know, or at least every Englishman ought to know, that for an unqualified person to have in *his possession* the body of a hare, pheasant, or partridge, was, a few months back, *a crime*, punishable by fine or imprisonment; that to have in his possession *wires*, or other implements, for taking any of these wild animals, is still *a crime*, punishable in the same manner; that, to be out in the night *in pursuit of*, and seeking after, the bodies of either of these wild animals, and carrying with him the implements wherewith to take or kill them, is still *a crime*, punishable with *transportation for seven years*, and this punishment may be inflicted, too, and has been, and is, frequently inflicted without the sanction of a *judge*, and at the sole discretion and pleasure of the justices in quarter-sessions, who, as you well know, are the game-preservers themselves. Yet those who could, and so recently too, pass over this last-mentioned law, and those new and "*liberal*" members who have been able to sit quietly, and say not a word about this law for transporting men for making free with the bodies of wild animals, which, according to Blackstone, are the property of no man, and which belong in common to all men; those who could make and so vigilantly enforce this law, cannot, for the lives and souls of them, find out the means of passing a law to protect the bodies, *alive or dead*, of the working people; other than that of making it lawful to *sell their bodies*

*when dead*, to cut up and cast away like the bodies of murderers or traitors. From every thing that I have ever heard here in the North, and particularly in this town, I believe, that if the horrible bill to which I have just alluded had become a law, that law would have never been acted upon by the parochial authorities of Manchester. I hope that the same would generally have been the case; but I have no scruple to say, that an attempt to enforce the law in any of the agricultural counties would have produced open and desperate rebellion. Judge you of the feelings of the country people on this subject, when I tell you that there are *clubs* in the country parishes in Sussex, Kent, Surrey, Hampshire, and, I suppose, in all the southern counties, which clubs are for the purpose of forming a *fund* for defraying the expenses of *watching the graves of the relations of the members of the club*, if any of them should die, or the graves of the *members themselves* if they should die! How honourable to the feelings of the working people, and how disgraceful to the Parliament, is this fact! Judge you what would have been the consequences of an attempt to enforce amongst such a people the atrocious bill for selling their bodies to be cut up like those of the most heinous malefactors! A labouring man, JAMES IVES, who worked constantly for me some time ago, came to me, with tears in his eyes, to get 12s. in advance of his wages, to pay (that being the price) for *watching the grave of his daughter*, who was just then about to be buried! Why what *government-protection* could this man discover? What had this man to make him willing to be obedient to the laws? Great care is taken of the *property of the rich*; the law hunts it with inflexible eagerness go whither it may; here the law *has grown harder and harder*,

till it has made the receiving of stolen goods a *felonious* offence, punishable with *transportation*. But those who passed and have enforced so rigidly this law, have not been able to find out by any means whatever to punish the **RECEIVERS OF STOLEN BODIES**; though they **MUST** of necessity **KNOW** them to have been stolen, if not murdered as well as stolen! Common justice, even natural justice, would make it *felony*, punishable with death, in any one to have in his *possession* a dead body, or a part of a dead body, unless able to produce proof that he obtained it in consequence of a *sentence of a court of justice*.

If *reform* be to bring us laws like this; if it be to give us rulers, who think it a good thing to make the *trade in human bodies free*; if this be the "*free trade*" they mean to give us; if this be a specimen of their *political economy*; if "*cheap*" human bodies be their sign of national prosperity; in short, if measures like this be to be the result of *Parliamentary reform*, better, far better, remain as we were, poor and oppressed; but not put *upon a level with the beasts that perish*, and see the flesh and bones of our relations, parents, wives, and children, tossed about to be devoured by the fowls of the air; or, like the body of JEZEBEL, to be torn about by dogs. **WARBURTON'S** is a miserable attempt to make us believe that the cutting-up is for the *benefit of the poor*, and that the law is to be impartial. The very *preamble* of the bill is false: and this I will now show to you in the words of a very eminent physician, who wrote to **WARBURTON** on the subject, when he brought in his first bill, and whose letter was published all over the country at the time. This physician *proved*, that the proposed law was not only *unnecessary* to a thorough know-

ledge of surgery; but that it was the contrary; that the *cutting up of human bodies* was *injurious* to the science of surgery. Here is his letter: I beg you to read it *with attention*. This physician recommends that which I recommend; namely, to make grave-robbing a *capital felony*. I pray you to read this letter: it will show you that that bloody practice is not at all necessary to the making of a man a skilful surgeon. If *it were*, I am prepared to prove, that this bill ought not to become a law: but first of all, read this letter; and you will be satisfied that the law is wholly unnecessary for the purpose for which it professes to be intended.

“*Cuilibet in arte sua credendum est.*”

“Sir,—As an ardently devoted and experienced member of the profession, pardon my questioning your philanthropy regarding the general expediency of ‘Human Dissections.’ He who has dissected and anatomised so much, from pure inclination, cannot reasonably be thought to be prejudiced against them. My firm conviction is, that they are by no means essential to the successful practice of the physician, nor, indeed, ordinary general practitioner.

“The study of anatomy and physiology (*i. e.* structure and function of the human body) I admit to be essential to the perfection of medical and surgical science. I repeat study, for the knowledge of both is perfectly attainable, without the aid of dissections, from our present fruits of them, in the way of preservations, engravings, explicit lectures, and scientific records.

“I canvass, primarily, the physician’s vocation—and what have dissections performed for him? First, as to the knowledge of disease. Disease, at its on-

set, indeed throughout, consists mainly of functional derangement; and what discovery of function has been made through dissection? For by function the symptoms and distinctions of disease are elicited. The perfection of this vitally important branch of the profession (pathology) is acquirable only by experience, which enables the physician to distinguish functional from organic affection. What information derived of vital function (*i. e.* brain, heart, lungs, stomach, and alimentary passages) by our minutest dissections? Has the discovery of injury of brain, after death, thrown any important light on the valued functions of its particular parts? Anatomy (*i. e.* dissections) throws no light whatever upon those prevailing and appalling maladies, St. Vitus's-dance, epilepsy, palsy, and apoplexy; and why? because, generally speaking, they are functional rather than organic affections. Much the same might be said of inflammations of mucous and serous surfaces, where life had been sacrificed to them; the blood, at the moment of dissolution, receding from arterial to venous cavities, leaving such surfaces more blanched than florid by it. Now this I affirm, not from mere prejudice or hypothesis, but experience. Again, consumption illustrates another ground of position, viz., as to the ulceration of the lungs. We know full well, without the forlorn aid of dissections, or stethoscope itself, that ulceration is consequent upon the inflammation of mucous and serous surfaces; nay more, that such ulceration of internal and vital organs, almost without exception, is death. We prevent, therefore, but cannot cure consumption, as lamentable experience has taught us. In a word, we need not dissections to tell us that the organic affections of vital parts usually prove fatal. Be it no longer said that

they are essential to successful practice; for it is most disreputable to science and the profession to have it supposed even that one consigned to our skill, should have expired without our knowledge (care being out of the question) of his malady.

"Seeing clearly our weapons must be such as to combat with morbid (*i. e.* deranged) function, it remains to be inquired what aids towards relief or cure have been derived through dissections? Our remedies, of any real efficacy at least, for the relief (cure, if you would rather) of functional derangement, are few; and these with a view to subdue inflammation, correct secret secretion, promote or restrain excretion, and give tone or vigour to the system. We are not assuredly indebted to dissections for our treatment of inflammation, morbid secretion, or debility; but rather to the lights of function and regimen, aided not a little by pathological and therapeutical experiences.

"I pass over the absurdity of medical testimony (grounded on dissections) in cases of abortion, rape, infanticide, idiotism, and insanity; and, from motives of delicacy, forbear the discussion of them. Under dread of poison, dissections at best are fallacious, and our knowledge derived more from chemical than anatomical acumen.

"Your 'report,' Sir, if I comprehend it aright, is to the effect—first, that all must dissect to qualify them for successful practice; secondly, that the bodies of executed criminals are insufficient for the purpose; and, thirdly, that the repeal of such Act, and the substitution of another (confessedly more productive) are essential to the perfection of medical science, and the well-being of mankind.

"Now, first, as to the expediency! 'Tis obvious; pardon me, Sir, that by far too much importance

has been attached to the testimony of Sir Astley Cooper and Mr. Abernethy, who are teachers of anatomy, and not physic, in London. I mean no disrespect nor disparagement towards these gentlemen; but why this stress upon their testimony? Sir A. C., after many years' painful and toilsome experience, is doomed to confess that the operations are a reproach to surgery. Mr. A., to his honour be it said, has ever been opposed to them. It would be superfluous at this moment to speak of their physical attainments, (apart, at any rate, from dissections and operations,) notwithstanding I affirm that these, and not dissections, are the very bulwarks of surgery. It were as manifest as the 'sun at noon-day,' that bodies became needful in support of the college law and rage for dissections; but your honourable Committee required *bona fide*, to know whether such dissections were demanded for the benefits of science and prosperity of the human race; for requisites assuredly they had made them for students passing college, or becoming licentiates of the Society of Apothecaries. I may humbly be permitted to suggest—teach students upon more rational and physical principles; require them to possess a sufficient classical education; sound physiological, pathological, therapeutical, and chemical knowledge; and afford them ample physical and surgical experiences; then hopes may be entertained of their becoming expert and skilful practitioners.

"Be it not said, for mercy's sake, that we require many operative surgeons, (when, in fact, were matters managed better, few, very few, indeed, would be needed;) and let these be select, so that, matured by much experience, they may be fully competent to the important duties thereof.

"Clinical experiences, beyond all your dissec-

tions, prove a treasure to the student; these eminently and truly teach him to distinguish between functional derangement and organic affection; to perceive the operation and the effects of remedies themselves, and, I had almost said, the divine influence of regimen. Emboldened by such, and the like, experiences, with confidence ere long he predicts the convalescence, or perchance the dissolution, of his patient. To sum up—the true doctrines of physic are founded upon unerring and fundamental principles; and such, believe me, as are eminently calculated to avert pending calamity; *i. e.* to supersede the necessity for operations, which, at best, are painful and calamitous to the afflicted.

“By the judicious treatment of gravel and stone; hernia and aneurisms; glandular affections and white swellings; fractures and dislocations; to the honour of science and the profession be it said, we save much and calamitous suffering in the world.

“Not to encroach upon your valuable time, Sir, or be thought prolix, I proceed, secondly, to remark, briefly, on the insufficiency of the bodies of executed criminals for scientific purposes. Immortality to our predecessors, we require not dissections at this day for the acquirement, much less the perfection, of physiological and physical science. The mechanism of the human body is amply displayed through the medium of engravings and preservations; and its functions, derangements, and diseases, are to be known and amended only upon the living body.

“Most unwillingly I advert to morbid dissections, the last *refuge of the inexperienced, and the blot of our art.* Few things have tended more to cast a stigma upon the profession, and afford a disrelish for dissections, than the heartless performance of

them in private life. Forlorn, indeed, our hope, if we expect to attain skill or eminence in the profession through such dissections. I speak not from prejudice, personality, or mere hypothesis, but from long and extensive observation and experience. Why most of our sudden deaths originating in derangement of vital functions, leave no traces of the source of dissolution behind them; and such as expire under more lingering indisposition, manifest to the experienced at least, organic affections peculiar to the structures of the affected organ or organs. We require not, therefore, to ascertain such appearances, nor would our doing so aid us at all in the knowledge or cure of them. To be brief—civilized beings naturally are averse to dissections; and God forbid they should ever become reconciled to them, or adieu to the ties of consanguinity, and those devoutly-to-be-admired sympathies of our natures, for which Britons, I am proud to confess, have been renowned from time immemorial. Thirdly, Sir, you *resolve to legalize pauper dissections, after the provisions of foreigners*, and speak of the advantages to be derived from them. The thing itself may be politic enough *in the way of trade*; but, for the honour of science, the credit of the profession, and the peace of society, I conjure you to pause ere your committee sanction with their honoured names so degrading, and at the same time so uncalled-for an expedient. Since, however, we must model our practice and schools of physic after the *fashion of the French*, I claim privilege briefly to advert to the benefits which science and the profession hitherto have derived from them.

“In anatomy and physiology, it must be confessed, the French have excelled; but have they comparatively benefited physic or surgery by it? Have

Drs. Gall and Spurzheim, by their minute dissections of the brain, added anything to our knowledge of it? We required not to know the seat and directions (nor indeed the functions) of its vast nerves and blood-vessels. Why, therefore, perplex ourselves about its mental developments, placed, doubtless, for the wisest of purposes, by an inscrutable Providence, beyond the reach or the scrutiny of man? Nor have we yet to learn,—thanks not to dissections, but experiences—that the brain's derangement of circulation is productive of correspondent derangement of function, and its organic affection, death. Bichat, Broussais, and Majendie, it is due to them to say, have called attention to mucous and serous surfaces, hitherto but insufficiently regarded (and imperfectly understood by many) in practice. Notwithstanding such acknowledged advantages, the French, I affirm, are inefficient practitioners. Do they not to this day, under the most acute inflammations (and inflammations, moreover, of vital organs,) content themselves with ptisans, syrups, anodynes, leechings, and enemata, calculated for the relief only of particular symptoms, leaving the malady itself to commit its ravages upon the affected organ, or constitution generally? How calamitous the consequences of tampering with the inflammations of vital organs!—take, for example, the lungs. Has not consumption afforded us a lesson; bid defiance to our every exertion, in spite of our discoveries and dissections; and are we still at a loss as to its origin, or the prevention (cure I maintain to be out of the question) of it? If not, why trifle (worse than trifle) with palliatives, which, under fevers and inflammations (without more efficient measures) seal the doom of the patients? A breath as to their surgical eminence, and I am done.

Baron Larry and Dupuytrien have distinguished themselves in surgery; but have they not been indebted mainly to their experiences? The former had most extensive field and hospital practice during the campaigns of the immortal Buonaparte; and the latter for many years has been engaged in the performance of vast hospital duties, being at this moment chief surgeon to the Hotel Dieu, in France.

"Impressed with the firmest conviction (inspired by an almost unparalleled devotedness to the profession) that experience, and by no means dissections, qualify alone for successful practice, I have been induced to impart these solemn convictions to you, Sir, in justice to a much-injured profession, and compassion towards a suffering public, whose condition (in lieu of the Act contemplated) you would best ameliorate by *rendering exhumation felony*, and quackery fraud.

"Finally, Sir, would mankind benefit their health or condition in society, I conjure them, without delay, to petition Parliament against a measure confessedly uncalled for, and fraught with sufferance and degradation to them. 'Virtus in actione consistit.'

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your obedient, humble servant,

"WM. HORSLEY, M. D.

"North Shields, Dec. 1828."

Now, my friends, observe, that *no answer* was ever given to this letter. DOCTOR PAYNE, an eminent physician of Nottingham, has just published a letter, sent by him to WARBURTON, expressing similar opinions, and concluding with the following words:

"There appears to be a path now presenting itself, by which the detestable crimes of Burking and violating the remains of the dead may be no longer

practised. The remains of murderers should as usual be given for dissection, but the bodies of none others; and transportation for those who steal or receive dead bodies. A law should also be passed to compel the teaching of anatomy by the artificial subject, as in France.

"I hope the idea of giving up the bodies of the unclaimed dead will be immediately abandoned, as it increases the exasperation which is constantly souring the minds of the working and middle classes, and rendering it unsafe to dwell in the land. It reminds them of the words of Southey the poet:—

' ' Wretched is the infant's lot,  
Born within the straw-roof'd cot;  
Be he generous, wise, or brave,  
He must only be a slave!  
Long, long labour, little rest,  
Still to toil, to be oppressed;  
Drain'd by taxes of his store,—  
*Punished next for being poor.*  
This is the poor wretch's lot,  
Born within the straw-roof'd cot.'

"Yes, the people make their remarks, 'When we have lost our all, and have outlived our friends and relations, our bodies are to be given up for dissection!'

"I remain, with much respect,

"Yours, respectfully,

"H. PAYNE, M. D.

"Nottingham, Dec. 10, 1831."

Thus, then, the *preamble* of the bill is false: this cutting up of human bodies is *unnecessary to the learning of surgery*. But now, if it *were necessary* to the perfection of that science, still a law like this ought not to be passed; and nothing ought to be done tending to put the bodies of the people on a level with the bodies of beasts. The assertion of the advocates of this carcass-cutting system is this: that unless the carcass and cutting-fellows be al-

lowed to carry on their practices, the knowledge of surgery *will be imperfect*; and that, therefore, the hacking and bloody practice must continue, and dead human bodies (to use the vulgar and unfeeling phrase of HUME) must become "*cheap*" in the market; or that some complaints to which we are liable must remain *without a cure*, and that many persons would, of course, *die sooner than they would die*, if the cutting and hacking system continued, and if HUME's *cheap human flesh* continued amply to supply the market.

This is the ASSERTION on which WARBURTON, HUME, DENMAN, and the rest of them, ground their project for making human bodies "CHEAP," as HUME calls it; and the bill, taken along with this argument of these men, will, if it become a law, say this to the nation: "Your dead bodies must be made to *come cheap* to those who deal in them and cut them up; or *some of you will die sooner than you otherwise would die*." This is the sum total of all that they have to say. HUME has *totted* the matter up; and this is the "*tottal*" of it. And now, my friends, hear *my answer* to these advocates of *free trade* in your flesh, blood, and bones.

FIRST of all; we have not only the *opinions* of Dr. HORSLEY against the *utility* of the butchery, but his *opinion* that it is *mischievous*; and he produces other high authorities in support of his opinions. But we have his *reasons* in support of the opinions; and we have, as far as I have observed, had *no answer* to these reasons.

NEXT; if this cutting-up work be so necessary, so indispensable, to the learning of surgery; how comes it that this *did not use to be the case*? How comes it that this traffic in human bodies, that the making of human flesh and bones "*cheap*," as

HUME calls it, was never found to be necessary BEFORE? Men's bodies have always been constructed as they are now; they have always been subject to the same ailments that they are subject to now; life has always been valued as highly as it is now; and yet never until now was this cutting up and hacking to pieces of the dead people deemed necessary to the health of the living people; and never until now did a band of surgeons take it into their heads to apply to the government to *set aside the ancient law of the land*, in order that they might have *free trade in human bodies*, to cut up and hack about at their pleasure! This is like the case of the *poor-law*: it did very well for *two hundred and fifty years*; but now it is found out that it *does harm*, and that STURGES BOURNE'S BILLS, and HARNESSING the poor, and that DISPOSING OF THEIR DEAD BODIES to be cut up, are necessary. Strange thing, that this Warburton should tell us, that he means his law *for the benefit of the poor*, while he talks of no law to *repeal Sturges Bourne's Bills*; no law to put a stop to the *harnessing* of them, and *making them draw like BEASTS OF BURDEN*; no law to prevent *hired overseers* from cutting off the hair of young girls; no law to prevent them from being treated like *beasts*, and only a law to make it no crime to receive their dead bodies and to hack them to pieces; and this too *out of kindness to them*!

So much for *authority and experience* to show that the horrible traffic in human flesh is not necessary. Indeed, as Dr. HORSLEY says, it is of no use to any body but illiterate quacks: it is, as he says, the *scandal and disgrace* of a most learned, honourable, and useful profession. ROUSSEAU said long ago, that a great increase of the number of

medical and surgical practitioners was a sure sign of the *decay of a nation*: and this is one of the signs of our decay at this moment. But, all this aside; setting all these arguments against the horrible practice down for nothing; and admitting the above assertion of the advocates of *free trade* in human bodies to be *true*: admitting that your dead bodies must, in the words of HUME and DENMAN, be made "*cheap*" to those who cut them up: admitting that "your dead bodies must be made to *come cheap* to those who deal in them and cut them up, or *that some of you would die sooner than you otherwise would die.*" I deny it; but, let us, for argument's sake, *admit it in its fullest extent*; and then let us see, whether it be not far better that we should be exposed to the endurance of some, and even to great *bodily ills*; and that some, and even many of us, *should die sooner* than we should if the horrible butchery were to go on: the question is, whether this would not be *preferable* to the suffering of this traffic to continue; whether it would not be *better* for us to endure these ills, and be subject to these dangers, than to insure, even to INSURE, ourselves against them, by sanctioning this horrible traffic in dead bodies? This is the question: and this question every man that has any thing of real humanity left about him, every man who cannot coolly *tot-up* the value of human feelings, will, without any hesitation, not only answer in the affirmative, but will feel somewhat offended at the question being put to him.

Those who make the above stated assertion, and who, on its being admitted, seem to think it *conclusive* for their purpose, proceed upon the truly base idea, that there is NOTHING SO VALUABLE AS LIFE; an idea just upon a level with the instinctive feeling of the most insensible of brutes.

But, is this the idea of those who are worthy to be called *men* and *women*? Where is the man (worthy of that name) who would not prefer the death of a wife or daughter to her prostitution; where is the man (worthy of that name) who would not prefer his own death to his assent to such prostitution? In thousands of instances, men (and working men too) have gone to certain death, rather than live with the reproach of having betrayed other men. There is, then, *something more valuable than life*; and is the value of life, then, to be put in competition with the value of *all those feelings which distinguish men from brutes*? And all, yea *all*, these feelings must be banished from the breast, before the mind will cease to contemplate with reverence and awe the remains of the dead.

As to the CHRISTIAN RELIGION, it is pure, not hypocrisy, but sheer impudence, to pretend to believe that it can long exist in a country where *the law* makes human bodies the subject of open traffic, where it authorizes the cutting of them up, the ripping and hacking of them to pieces, with no more ceremony than the cutting-up of the bodies of sheep and pigs. We all know, for we have all first or last felt, that the bare sight of a dead human body fills us with serious thoughts, and that even a funeral, passing by, has, in some degree, the same effect. Can this continue to be the case, if it shall become a fact familiar to every mind, that a human body has belonging to it nothing more sacred than the body of a hog or a dog? People of all the sects of Christians have been careful to set apart places for the burial of the dead. However they disagree in other matters, they are all of accord in this, to reverence the remains of the dead. But how is this feeling to exist, when they shall know that the

*trade in dead bodies is free ; and that, as Sir ROBERT INGLIS states it, there are always "EIGHT HUNDRED MEN in London, engaged in learning how to cut human bodies to pieces!"*

If this law pass, what becomes of the "*consecration of ground*?" What becomes of the *Church Service*? What becomes of the *Rubrick*; what of "*the burial of the dead*?" Dispense with *that*; declare, by *law*, that that is *useless*; and, then, where will there be to be found even a parson, though with half-a-dozen benefices, brazen enough to tell any of the people of any of his parishes, that *any part* of the Book of Common Prayer is worthy of their attention? What, if a law like this be passed, will any parson, after that, demand *fees* for saying *prayers over dead bodies*? It is as well, for *morals* and *religion*, that those bodies be sold and cut up, as that they be buried in a church-yard with the usual solemnities; or, it is not. If the latter, the intended law *is injurious to morals and religion*: if the former, we have long been *paying burial fees merely to fatten the parsons*. In short, it must be evident to every man who reflects but for a moment, *that a belief in a future state of existence* is impossible to be kept alive, for any length of time, in a country where the law makes (as law would make) no distinction in the treatment of the dead body of a man and that of the dead body of a horse; both being alike articles of traffic; both being openly cut up for the use of the purchaser; both being hacked about with an equal absence of all ceremony.

We all know the *power of habit*; we all know that the blackest crimes proceed from *small beginnings*; theft, robbery, burglary, murder, is generally the march. The habit of our thoughts has made the most of men hesitate at the commission

of the last horrid crime: they have hitherto seen something in a human body that held back their hands: but when, as in the case of the monster BISHOP, they have been *accustomed* to consider human bodies as nothing more sacred than those of pigs and sheep, what is to restrain them from resorting to the killing of those bodies? This bill may, perhaps, not *directly*, authorize the selling of the bodies of poor people dying in poor-houses and hospitals and prisons; but that such are the *tendency* and *intention* of it nobody can doubt. It is well known, that the *rich* have the means of *protecting* the dead bodies of their relations, and that the poor have not. And where is the man so brutal as to say that his heart is not chilled with the thought of proclaiming openly to the unfortunate poor, that their carcasses when dead are to be sold for dissection? What! is there a man in England, to propose this? And is this proposition to be made even to the Parliament, and that too in a country where the depositories of the dead, and the decent interment of dead bodies, have always been objects of such attention? Are there men hardy enough for this? What! the poor labourer, who, after having toiled all his life; after having brought himself to death, at a premature old age, very likely, by the excess of his toil; is he, because in his old age he is compelled to resort to the parish for relief, to be harassed in his last moments with the thought that in a few minutes the butchers will have their knives in his belly, and be hacking and chopping him to pieces like the carcass of a dead dog? Oh! no. England will never see this. Is the husband to see his dead wife taken away in the butcher's cart, and carried to the slaughter-house, instead of having the mournful duty to perform of following

her to the grave? Are fathers and mothers to see their children, and are children to see their parents, tossed into the bloody cart, and carried away for dissection? The very thought fills me, and I trust it will fill every Englishman who is worthy of the name, with indignation not to be expressed.

The working people in the country have given the best possible proof of their abhorrence of any law, having such a tendency, by forming themselves into CLUBS for the purpose of providing the means of WATCHING THEIR OWN GRAVES, AND THOSE OF THEIR NEAR AND DEAR RELATIONS; a fact to their everlasting honour, and to the everlasting disgrace of those who have rendered this measure necessary. Talk of *Reform*, indeed! The people will be able easily to estimate the character and views of those "*Reformers*" who want to make dead human bodies "*cheap*" in the dissecting market! This is now, apparently, become a measure of the "*Reforming Ministry*." The people will at last have to rely, I dare say, *upon the Lords* again; and if they drive this bill from them with indignation, they will not only act justly, but *wisely*; and will, by this one act, do more for the honour and stability of *their order*, than by all the other means that human wit would be able to devise.

Now, my friends, keep your eye on *all those* whom you perceive to be *in favour of this bill*. I will do my best to *place them safely upon record*. For my part, my determination is, that if this bill pass, to do my utmost to cause its repeal, and never to hold any confidential intercourse with any one of those who may have supported it. And in the meanwhile I remain your friend,

WM. COBBETT.

## NOTE TO SERMON ON GAMBLING.

THIS wile paper-money and funding system ; this system of Dutch descent, begotten by Bishop Burnet and born in hell ; this system has turned every thing into a gamble. There are hundreds of men who live by being the agents *to carry on gambling*. They reside here in the Wen ; many of the gamblers live in the country ; they write up to their gambling agent, whom they call their stockbroker ; he gambles according to their order ; and they receive the profit or stand to the loss. Is it possible to conceive a viler calling than that of an agent for the carrying on of gambling ! And yet the vagabonds call themselves gentlemen ; or, at least, look upon themselves as the superiors of those who sweep the kennels. In like manner is the hop-gamble carried on. The gambling agents in the Wen make the bets for the gamblers in the country ; and, perhaps, millions are betted during the year, upon the amount of a duty, which, at the most, scarcely exceeds a quarter of a million. In such a state of things how are you to expect young men to enter on a course of patient industry ? How are you to expect *that they* will seek to acquire fortune and fame by study or by application of any kind ?

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*Extracts from a work by the same author, called*

## RURAL RIDES.

I got to GOUDHURST to breakfast, and, as I heard that the *Dean of Rochester* was to preach a sermon in behalf of the *National Schools*, I stopped to hear him. In waiting for his Reverence, I went to the *Methodist Meeting-house*, where I

found the Sunday School boys and girls assembled, to the almost filling of the place, which was about thirty feet long and eighteen wide. The "*Minister*" was not come, and the Schoolmaster was reading to the children out of a *tract-book*, and shaking the brimstone bag at them most furiously. This schoolmaster was a *sleek-looking* young fellow: his skin perfectly tight: well fed I'll warrant him: and he has discovered the way of living, without work, on the labour of those that do work. There were 36 little fellows in smock-frocks, and about as many girls, listening to him; and I dare say he eats as much meat as any ten of them. By this time the *Dean*, I thought, would be coming on; and, therefore, to the church I went; but to my great disappointment, I found that the parson was operating *preparatory* to the appearance of the Dean, who was to come on in the afternoon, when I, agreeably to my plan, must be off. The sermon was from 2 Chronicles, ch. 31. v. 21, and the words of this text described King Hezekiah as a most *zealous man*, doing whatever he did *with all his heart*. I write from *memory*, mind, and, therefore, I do not pretend to quote exact words; and I may be a little in error, perhaps, as to chapter or verse. The object of the preacher was to hold up to his hearers, *the example* of Hezekiah, and *particularly in the case of the school affair*. He called upon them to subscribe with all their hearts; but, alas! how little of *persuasive power* was there in what he said! No effort to make them see *the use of the schools*. No inducement *proved* to exist. No argument, in short, nor any thing to move. No appeal either to the *reason*, or to the *feeling*. All was general, common-place, cold observation; and that, too, in language which the far greater

part of the hearers could not understand. This church is about 110 feet long and 70 feet wide in the clear. It would hold *three thousand* people, and it had in it 214, besides 53 Sunday School or National School boys; and these sat together, in a sort of lodge, up in a corner, 16 feet long and 10 feet wide. Now, will any PARSON MALTHUS, or any body else, have the impudence to tell me, that this church was built for the use of a population not more numerous than the present? To be sure, when this church was built, there could be no idea of a *methodist meeting* coming to *assist* the church, and as little, I dare say, was it expected, that the preachers in the church would ever call upon the faithful to subscribe money to be sent up to one JOSHUA WATSON (living in a WEN) to be by him laid out in "*promoting Christian Knowledge*;" but, at any rate, the Methodists cannot take away above four or five hundred; and what, then, was this great church built *for*, if there were no more people, in those days, at GOUDHURST, than there are now? It is very true, that the *labouring* people have, in a great measure, ceased to go to church. There were scarcely any of that class at this great country church to-day. I do not believe there were *ten*. I can remember when they were so numerous, that the parson could not attempt to begin, till the rattling of their nailed shoes ceased. I have seen, I am sure, five hundred boys and men in smock-frocks coming out of church at one time. To-day has been a *fine day*: there would have been many at church to-day, if ever there are; and here I have another to add to the many things that convince me, that the labouring classes have, in great part, ceased to go to church; that their way of thinking and feeling with regard to both church and

clergy are totally changed; and that there is now very little *moral hold* which the latter possess. This *preaching for money to support the schools* is a most curious affair altogether. The King sends a *circular letter* to the BISHOPS (as I understand it) to cause subscriptions for the schools; and the *bishops* (if I am rightly told) tell the parish clergy to send the money, when collected, to JOSHUA WATSON, the Treasurer of a Society in the WEN, "*for promoting Christian Knowledge!*" What! the church and all its clergy put into motion to get money from the people, to send up to one JOSHUA WATSON, a *wine-merchant*, or, late a wine-merchant, in *Mincing Lane*, Fenchurch-street, London, in order that the said wine-merchant may apply the money to the "*promoting of Christian Knowledge!*" What! all the deacons, priests, curates perpetual, vicars, rectors, prebends, doctors, deans, archdeacons, and fathers in God, right reverend and most reverend; all! yea all, engaged in getting money together to send to a wine-merchant that he may lay it out in the promoting of Christian knowledge *in their own flocks!* Oh, brave wine-merchant! What a prince of godliness must this wine-merchant be! I say, wine-merchant, or late wine-merchant, of Mincing Lane, Fenchurch-street, London. And, for God's sake, some good parson, do send me up *a copy of the King's circular*, and also of the *bishop's order to send the money to JOSHUA WATSON*; for some precious sport we will have with JOSHUA and his "*Society*" before we have done with them!

Coming through the village of BENENDEN, I heard a man, at my right, talking very loud about *houses! houses! houses!* It was a Methodist parson, in a house, close by the road side. I pulled

up, and stood still, in the middle of the road, but looking, in silent soberness, into the window (which was open) of the room in which the preacher was at work. I believe my stopping rather disconcerted him; for he got into shocking repetition. "Do you know," said he, laying great stress on the word know: "do you know, that you have ready for you houses, houses I say; I say do you know; do you know that you have houses in the heavens not made with hands? Do you know this from *experience*! Has the blessed Jesus *told you so*?" And, on he went to say, that, if Jesus had told them so, they would be saved, and that if he had not, and did not, they would be damned. Some girls whom I saw in the room, plump and rosy as could be, did not seem at all daunted by these menaces; and indeed, they appeared to me to be thinking much more about getting houses for themselves *in this world first*: just to *see a little* before they entered, or endeavoured to enter, or even thought much about, those "*houses*" of which the parson was speaking: *houses* with pig-styes and little snug gardens attached to them, together with all the other domestic and conjugal circumstances, these girls seemed to me to be preparing themselves for. The truth is, these fellows have no power on the minds of any but the miserable.

Scarcely had I proceeded a hundred yards from the place where this fellow was bawling, when I came to the very situation which he ought to have occupied, I mean the *stocks*, which the people of BENENDEN have, with singular humanity, fitted up with a *bench*, so that the patient, while he is receiving the benefit of the remedy, is not exposed to the danger of catching cold by sitting, as in other

places, upon the ground, always damp and sometimes actually wet. But I would ask the people of BENENDEN what is the *use* of this humane precaution, and, indeed, what is the use of the stocks themselves, if, while a fellow is ranting and bawling in the manner just described at the distance of a hundred yards from the stocks, the stocks (as is here actually the case) are almost hidden by *grass* and *nettles*? This, however, is the case all over the country; not nettles and grass indeed smothering the stocks, but, I never see any feet peeping through the holes, any where, though I find methodist parsons every where, and though *the law compels the parishes to keep up* all the pairs of stocks that exist in all parts of them; and, in some parishes, they have to keep up several pairs. I am aware, that a good part of the use of the stocks is the *terror* they ought to produce. I am not supposing, that they are of *no use* because not *continually furnished with legs*. But, there is a wide difference between *always* and *never*; and it is clear, that a fellow, who has had the stocks under his eye *all his lifetime*, and has *never* seen a pair of feet peeping through them, will stand no more in awe of the stocks, than *rooks* do of an old *shoyhoy*, or than the Ministers or their agents do of Hobhouse and Burdett. Stocks that *never* pinch a pair of ankles are like ministerial *responsibility*; a thing to *talk about*, but for no other use; a mere mockery; a thing laughed at by those whom it is intended to keep in check. It is time that the stocks were again *in use*, or that the expense of keeping them up were put an end to. This *mild*, this *gentle*, this *good-humoured* sort of correction, is *not enough* for our present rulers. But, mark the consequence; *gaols ten times as big as formerly*; houses of cor-

*rection; treadmills; the hulks; and the country filled with spies of one sort and another, game-spies, or other spies, and if a hare or pheasant come to an untimely death, police-officers from the WEN [London] are not unfrequently called down to find out and secure the bloody offender! Mark this, Englishmen! Mark how we take to those things, which we formerly ridiculed in the French; and take them up too just as that brave and spirited people have shaken them off! I saw, not long ago, an account of a WEN police-officer being sent into the country, where he assumed a disguise, joined some poachers, (as they are called,) got into their secrets, went out in the night with them, and then (having laid his plans with the game-people) assisted to take them and convict them. What! is this England? Is this the land of "manly hearts?" Is this the country that laughed at the French for their submissions? What! are police-officers kept for this? Does the law say so? However, thank God Almighty, the estates are passing away into the hands of those who have had borrowed from them the money to uphold this monster of a system. The Debt! The blessed Debt, will, at last, restore to us freedom.*

\* \* \* \* \*

This TENTERDEN, is a market town, and a singularly bright spot. It consists of one street, which is, in some places, more, perhaps, than *two hundred feet wide*. On one side of the street the houses have gardens before them. from 20 to 70 feet deep. The town is upon a hill; the afternoon was very fine, and, just as I rose the hill and entered the street, the people had come out of church and were moving along towards their houses. It was a very fine sight. *Shabbily dressed people do not go to*

*church.* I saw, in short, drawn out before me, the dress and beauty of the town; and a great many very, very pretty girls I saw; and saw them, too, in their best attire. I remember the girls in the *Pays de Caux*, and, really, I think those of TENTERDEN resemble them. I do not know why they should not; for, there is the *Pays de Caux*, only *just over the water*; just opposite this very place.

The church at this place is a very large and fine old building. The tower stands upon a base thirty feet square. Like the church at GOUDHURST, it will hold *three thousand people*. And, let it be observed, that when these churches were built, people had not yet thought of cramming them with *pews*, as a stable is filled with stalls. Those who built these churches had no idea that *worshipping* God meant, going to *sit* to hear a man talk out what he called preaching. By *worship*, they meant very different things; and, above all things, when they had made a fine and noble building, they did not dream of disfiguring the inside of it by filling its floor with large and deep boxes made of deal boards. In short, the floor was the place for the *worshippers* to *stand* or to *kneel*; and there was *no distinction*; no *high* place and no *low* place; all were upon a level *before God* at any rate. Some were not stuck into pews lined with green or red cloth, while others were crammed into corners to stand erect, or sit on the floor. These odious distinctions are of *Protestant* origin and growth. This lazy lolling in pews we owe to what is called the *Reformation*. A place filled with *benches* and *boxes* looks like an *eating* or a *drinking* place; but certainly not like a place of *WORSHIP*. A Frenchman, who had been driven from St. Domingo to Philadelphia by the Wilberforces of France, went to

church along with me one Sunday. He had never been in a Protestant place of *worship* before. Upon looking round him, and seeing every body comfortably *seated*, while a couple of good *stoves* were keeping the place as warm as a slack oven, he exclaimed: "*Pardi! On sert Dieu bien a son aise ici!*" That is, "Egad! they *serve* God very much *at their ease* here!" I always think of this, when I see a church full of pews; as, indeed, is now always the case with our churches. Those who built these churches had no idea of this: they made their calculations as to the people to be contained in them, not making any allowance for *deal boards*. I often wonder how it is, that the present parsons are not ashamed to call the churches *theirs*! They must know the origin of them; and, how they can look at them, and, at the same time, revile the *Catholics*, is astonishing to me.

This evening I have been to the Methodist Meeting-house. I was attracted, fairly drawn all down the street, by the *singing*. When I came to the place the parson was got into prayer. His hands were clenched together and held up, his face turned up and back so as to be nearly parallel with the ceiling, and he was bawling away, with his "*do thou,*" and "*mayest thou,*" and "*may we,*" enough to stun one. Noisy, however, as he was, he was unable to fix the attention of a parcel of girls in the gallery, whose eyes were *all over the place*, while his eyes were so devoutly shut up. After a deal of this rigmarole called prayer, came the *preachy*, as the negroes call it; and a *preachy* it really was. Such a mixture of whining cant and of foppish affectation I scarcely ever heard in my life. The text was (I speak from memory) one of Saint Peter's Epistles (if he have more than one)

the 18th Chapter and 4th Verse. The words were to this amount : that, *as the righteous would be saved with difficulty, what must become of the ungodly and the sinner !* After as neat a dish of nonsense and of impertinences as one could wish to have served up, came the distinction between the *ungodly* and the *sinner*. The sinner was one who *did moral wrong* ; the ungodly one, who did *no moral wrong*, but who was not *regenerated*. *Both*, he positively told us, were to be DAMNED. One was just as bad as the other. Moral rectitude was to do nothing in saving the man. He was to be damned, unless born again, and how was he to be born again, unless he came to the regeneration shop, and gave the fellows money ? He distinctly told us, that a man *perfectly moral*, might be *damned* ; and that “ the vilest of the vile, and the basest of the base ” ( I quote his very words ) “ would be saved if they became *regenerate* ; and that *Colliers*, whose souls had been as *black* as their *coals*, had, by regeneration, become bright as the saints that sing before God and the Lamb.” And will the *Edinburgh Reviewers* again find fault with me for cutting at this bawling, canting crew ? Monstrous it is to think that the Clergy of the Church really encourage these roving fanatics. The Church seems aware of its loss of credit and of power. It seems willing to lean even upon these men ; who, be it observed, seem, on their part, to have taken the Church *under their protection*. They always pray for the *Ministry* ; I mean the ministry at *Whitehall*. They are most “ *loyal* ” souls. The *THING* protects them ; and they lend their aid in upholding the *THING*. What silly, nay, what base creatures those must be, who really give their *money*, give their pennies, which ought to buy bread

to their own children ; who thus give their money to these lazy and impudent fellows, who call themselves *ministers of God*, who prowl about the country, living easy and jovial lives upon the fruit of the labour of other people. However, it is, in some measure, these people's fault. If they did not *give*, the others could not *receive*. I wish to see every labouring man well fed and well clad ; but, really, the man who gives any portion of his earnings to these fellows, **DESERVES TO WANT** : he deserves to be pinched with hunger : misery is the just reward of this worst species of prodigality.

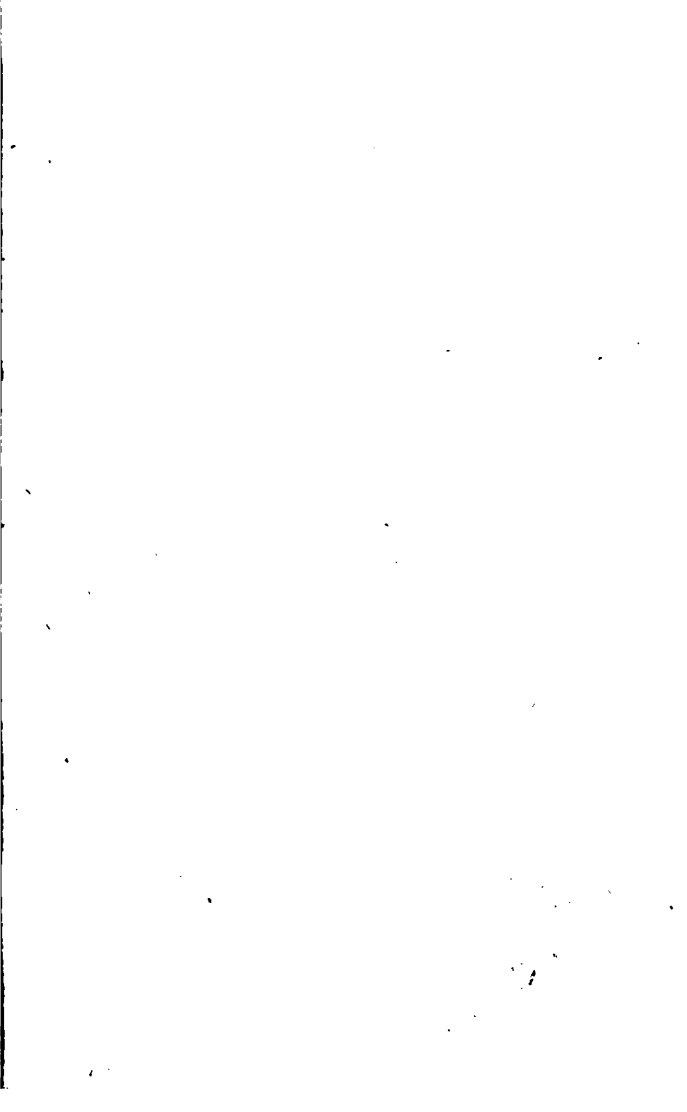
The *singing* makes a great part of what passes in these meeting-houses. A number of women and girls singing together make very *sweet sounds*. Few men there are who have not felt the *power* of sounds of this sort. Men are sometimes pretty nearly bewitched, without knowing how. *Eyes* do a good deal, but *tongues* do more. We may talk of sparkling eyes and snowy bosoms as long as we please ; but, what are these with a *croaking, masculine* voice ? The parson seemed to be fully aware of the importance of this part of the "*service*." The subject of his hymn was something about *love* : Christian love ; love of Jesus ; but still it was about *love* ; and the parson read, or gave out, the verses, in a singularly *soft* and *sighing* voice, with his head on one side, and giving it rather a swing. I am satisfied, that the singing forms great part of the *attraction*. Young girls like to sing ; and young men like to hear them. Nay, old ones too ; and as I have just said, it was the singing that *drew* me three hundred yards down the street at TENTERDEN, to enter this meeting-house. By-the-by, I wrote *some Hymns myself*, and published them in "*Two-penny Trash*." I will

give any Methodist parson leave to put them into his hymn-book.

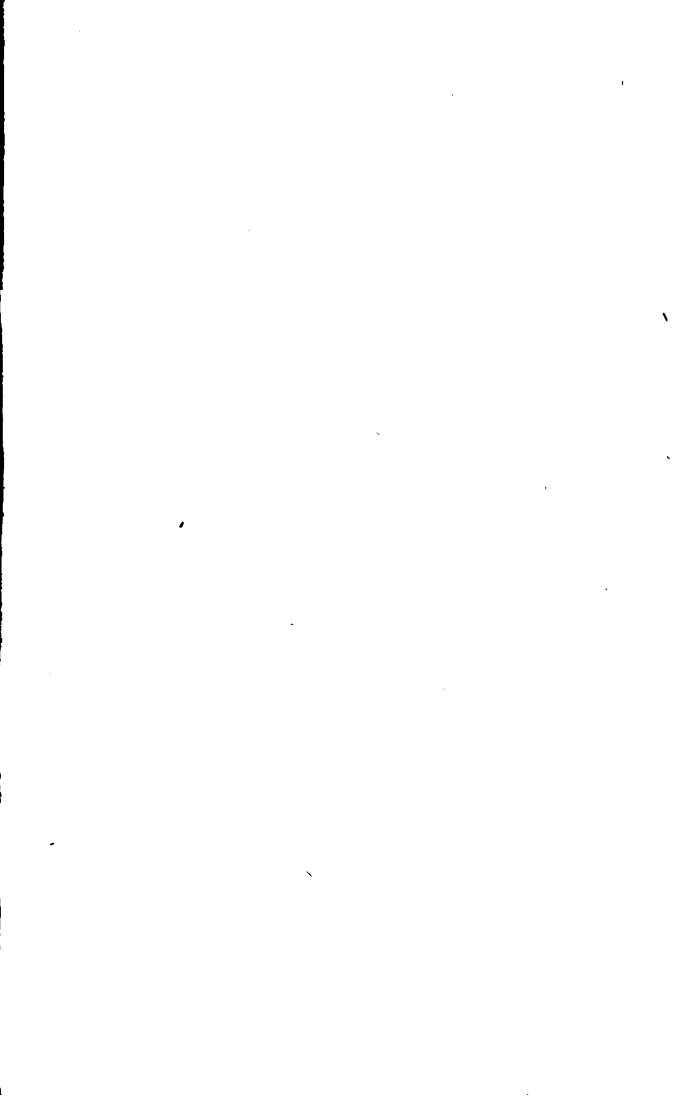
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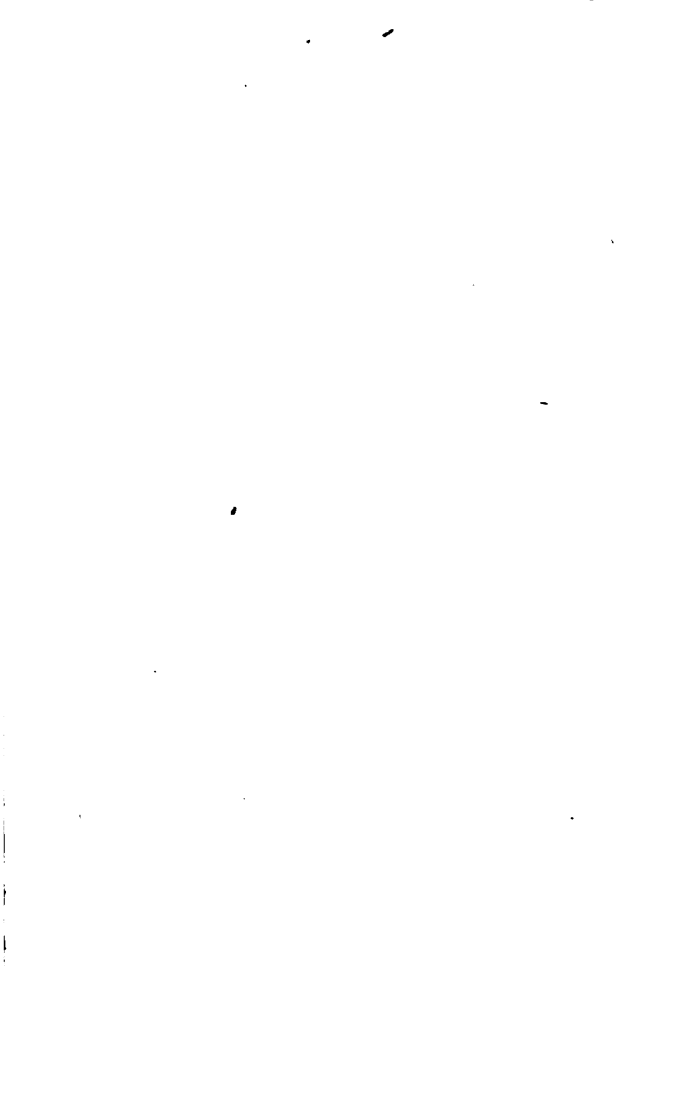
A parson said to me, once, by letter: "your religion, Mr. Cobbett, seems to me to be altogether *political*." "Very much so indeed," answered I, "and well it may, since I have been furnished with a *creed which makes part of an Act of Parliament*." And, the fact is, I am no Doctor of Divinity, and like a religion, *any religion*, that tends to make men innocent and benevolent and happy, by taking the best possible means of furnishing them with plenty to eat and drink and wear. I am a Protestant of the Church of England, and, as such, blush to see, that *more than half* the parsonage-houses are *wholly gone*, or are become *mere hovels*. What I have written on the "**PROTESTANT REFORMATION**," has proceeded entirely from a sense of justice towards our calumniated Catholic forefathers, to whom we owe *all* those of our institutions that are worthy of our admiration and gratitude. I have not written as a Catholic, but as an Englishman; yet, a sincere Catholic must feel some little gratitude towards me; and, if there was an ungrateful reptile in the neighbourhood of Preston, to give, as a toast, "*success to Stanley and Wood*," the conduct of those Catholics that I have seen here has, as far as I am concerned, amply compensated for his baseness.

THE END.









~~APR 18 '68~~

*June*

